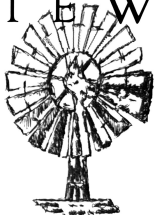
A JOURNAL OF WESTERN OKLAHOMA
WESTVIEW



Volume 2
Issue 4 *Summer*

Article 1

6-1-1983

Westview: Vol. 2, Iss. 4 (Summer 1983)

WESTVIEW

A JOURNAL OF WESTERN OKLAHOMA

VOLUME II

Published Quarterly by Southwestern Center for Regional Studies

NUMBER 4

WESTERN OKLAHOMA RANCHING

SUMMER, 1983

$3.00

"BRANDING TIME" BY LINDA FICKLING

TREASURES

HORSE CENTS

CONNECTIONS

POETIC GLIMPSES

HOMESTEADING

BEUTLERS

PRO RODEO

FOREWORD

With this Summer 1983 issue on Western Oklahoma Ranching we have arrived at the end of our second year of publication.

We feel an honest debt of gratitude to our readers, subscribers, and contributors — including those who have submitted manuscripts, photographs, and illustrations. Our special gratitude goes to Linda Fickling and Katherine Dickey, who have been very cooperative about providing extra illustrations and photographs.

Of course a quality publication doesn't just come from a puff of smoke following the wiggling of a nose. Our principal debt is to Jack and Margaret Shelton and their staff at Weatherford Press. They have a special facility for bringing order out of our chaos. Assistance is given them on cover work by Magnacolor of Oklahoma City and Heritage Press of El Reno.

Many freelancers, whose names have appeared in our masthead and on our lists of contributors, have made worthwhile contributions.

And Donita Lucas Shields has been more than merely a staff writer. She has also assisted in sales and advertising.

We continue to need our readers' contributions. We invite all writers, photographers, and artists to study our announcements of future themes appearing in each issue of the journal. We look expectantly toward many future years of WESTVIEW.

— Leroy Thomas

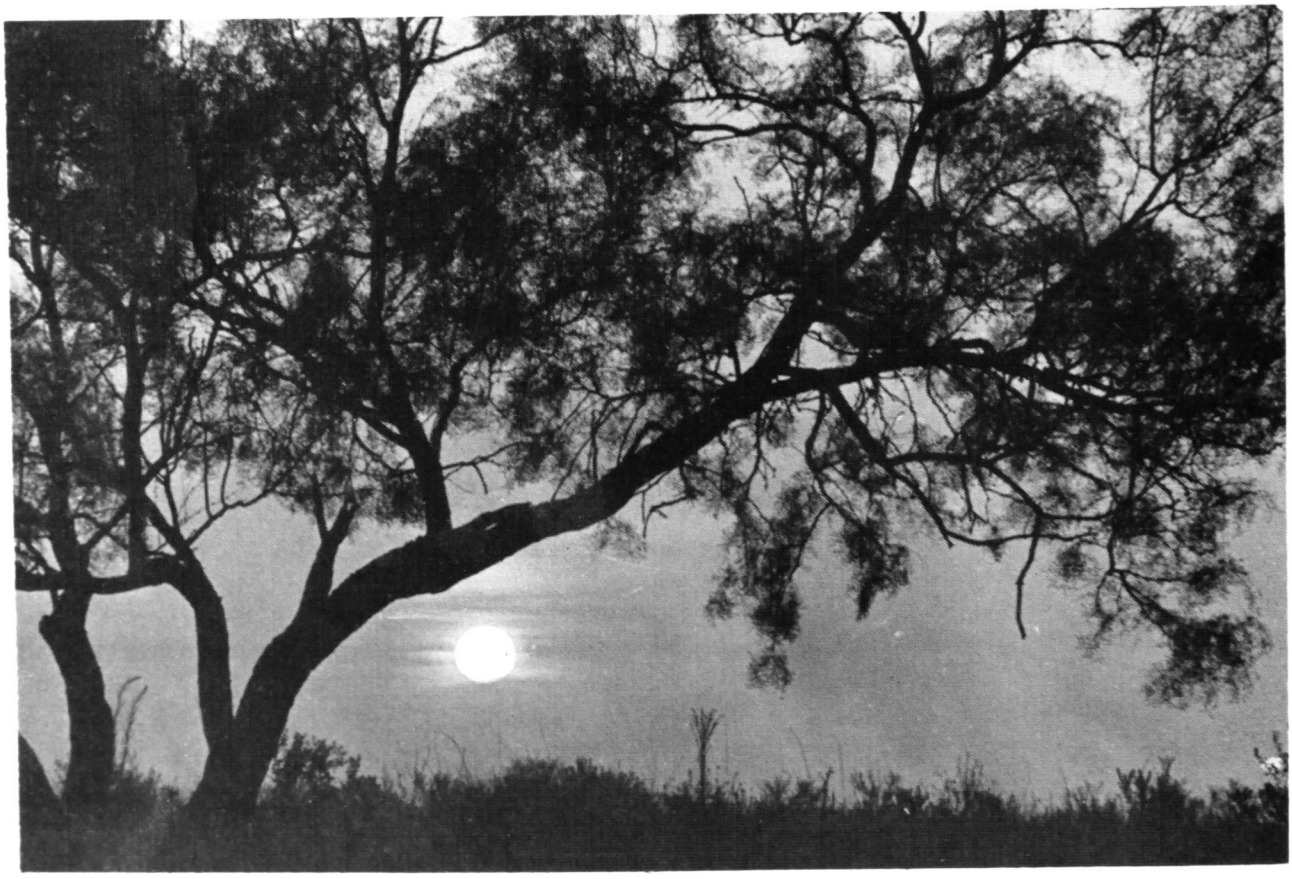


PHOTO BY RICK FELTY

reaching into the past —

WESTVIEW
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Western Oklahoma Ranching

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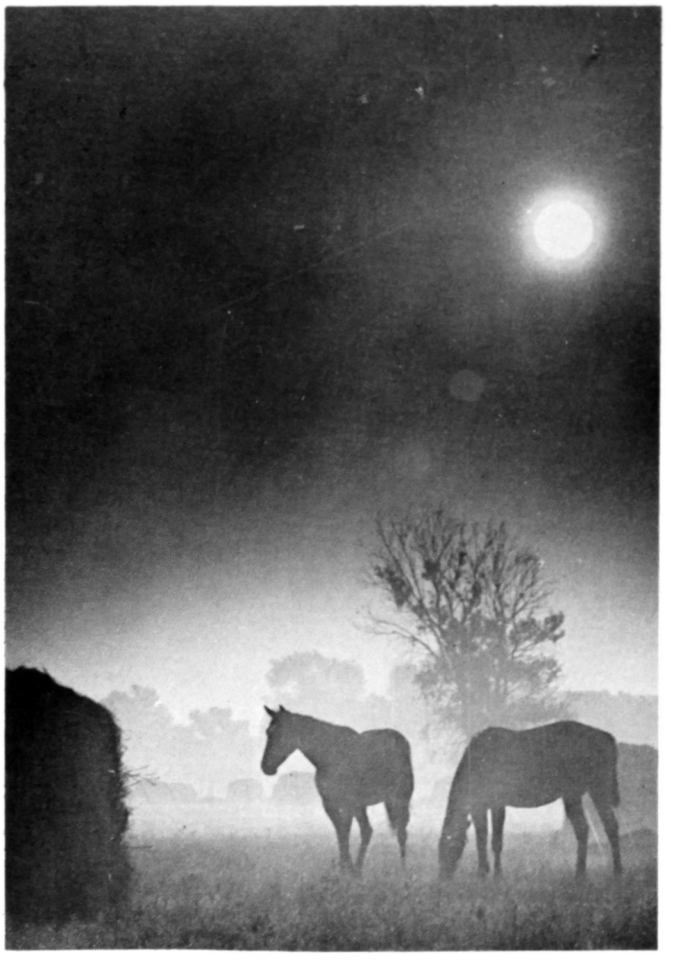


PHOTO BY RICK FELTY

placid August morning —

2

ON THE COVERS both by Linda Fickling. Front "Branding Time." Back "Round up."

WESTVIEW is the official quarterly of the Southwestern Center for Regional Studies. To be published in the journal are scholarly articles, local history sketches, memoirs, biographies, autobiographies, graphic arts, book reviews, and creative writing. Submissions along with SASE, are to be sent to: Dr. Leroy Thomas, Managing Editor, WESTVIEW, Southwestern Oklahoma State University, Weatherford, Oklahoma 73096.

— a SOSU professor reveals that the life of the farmer-rancher was sometimes difficult.

HOMESTEADING AND AFTERWARDS

— by Elsie Lang

David and Beulah Hughes on their wedding day — October 6, 1929

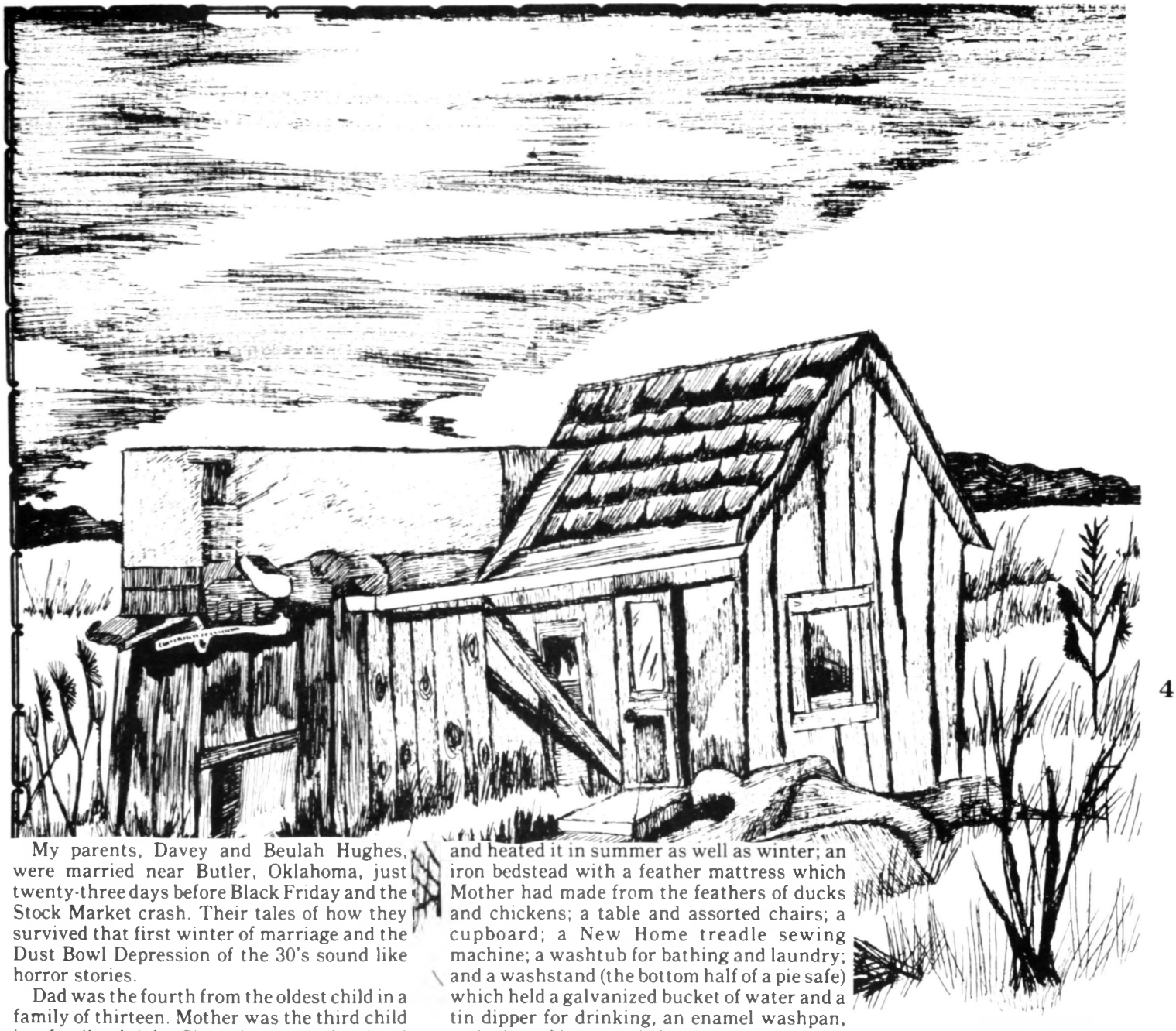


ILLUSTRATION BY LINDA FICKLING

My parents, Davey and Beulah Hughes, were married near Butler, Oklahoma, just twenty-three days before Black Friday and the Stock Market crash. Their tales of how they survived that first winter of marriage and the Dust Bowl Depression of the 30's sound like horror stories.

Dad was the fourth from the oldest child in a family of thirteen. Mother was the third child in a family of eight. Since times were hard and their families were large, they got little help from their parents. More importantly, they expected none.

Shortly after their marriage, they moved from Dad's parents' crowded house into a one-room clapboard shack (a shack by contemporary standards) which stood unprotected by trees on a rented quarter-section of land that sprouted mostly buffalo grass, sunflowers, thistles, and gyp rocks. To them, their first home looked like a mansion. The outside boards were also the inside walls, and many nights during the winter their breath froze on the bed covers.

Dad had managed to save a little money from selling the pelts of wild animals that he had trapped during the previous winters, and with this money, they bought used furniture and other things for their home: a wood-burning cookstove which dominated the room and heated it in summer as well as winter; an iron bedstead with a feather mattress which Mother had made from the feathers of ducks and chickens; a table and assorted chairs; a cupboard; a New Home treadle sewing machine; a washtub for bathing and laundry; and a washstand (the bottom half of a pie safe) which held a galvanized bucket of water and a tin dipper for drinking, an enamel washpan, and a bar of homemade lye soap.

There was little money until crops could be raised and sold, and there was little food until a garden could be planted. Dad tells of shooting rabbits and quail as he rode Old Molly, his mule, through the snow to work. He was lucky enough to find a job cutting feed from daylight to dark for a dollar a day — good money then. The only problem was that the job lasted only until the crop was gathered in. Then Dad cut timber for firewood on a neighboring farm, giving the owner two-fifths of the cut wood.

Christmas that first year was bleak. Mother made a fresh batch of lye soap, and Dad drove her to Butler where she went door-to-door trying to sell enough soap to buy presents for both of their families. But everyone was poor, especially the townfolk, so she sold only twenty-five cents worth. With this money, she bought a large sack of candy which they shared with their numerous brothers, sisters, nieces,

nephews, and parents.

Their menus that first winter were monotonous, but there was enough milk (Mother's family had given them a heifer), eggs, wild game, and sidemeat to keep them alive until spring when they could gather polk greens (Mother still remembers her craving for fresh oranges when she became pregnant with me, but vitamin C was not in their winter diet.). During their first summer together, they searched for wild plums, currants, and grapes to can — without sugar. Mother also canned vegetables from their garden, and they exchanged wheat and corn at the mill for flour and cornmeal. In the fall, they butchered a hog, salting it down so that it would keep during the winter.

Crops had to be planted and gathered, either by hand or with the help of a team of mules or horses. Binder machines, pulled by five or six horses, required a minimum of twelve men to harvest a crop of wheat, and a large field took two to three weeks of good weather to harvest. This crew of men, usually unmarried boys of neighboring farmers who needed the money their sons could earn, had to be fed three meals a day. And many of the hired hands spent the night, sleeping on a wagon in the yard. To pay the expenses of gathering in the first meager crop, Dad sold a wagonload of wheat (at twenty-three cents a bushel) and two coops of chickens.

Since there was no refrigeration, Mother prepared the food fresh each day. She often put freshly churned butter in a bucket and lowered it into the cistern to keep it from melting until dinner time, but she lived in fear that someone wanting a drink would dump the butter into the cistern and spoil their drinking water.

When she wasn't cooking or canning, Mother helped with the field work: chopping and picking cotton, building fence, cultivating corn and maize. At night, when it was too dark to work in the fields, she helped with the milking.

Washing and ironing clothes was another time-consuming chore. Buckets of water, drawn from the cistern, were heated outside in a black kettle to which lye soap shavings were added. The white clothes went into the boiling water and were stirred with a stick until they came clean. Then they were lifted out with the stick and were placed in a washtub until they were cool enough to wring out, rinse, and starch. While this batch was cooling, the next-to-lightest load of laundry went

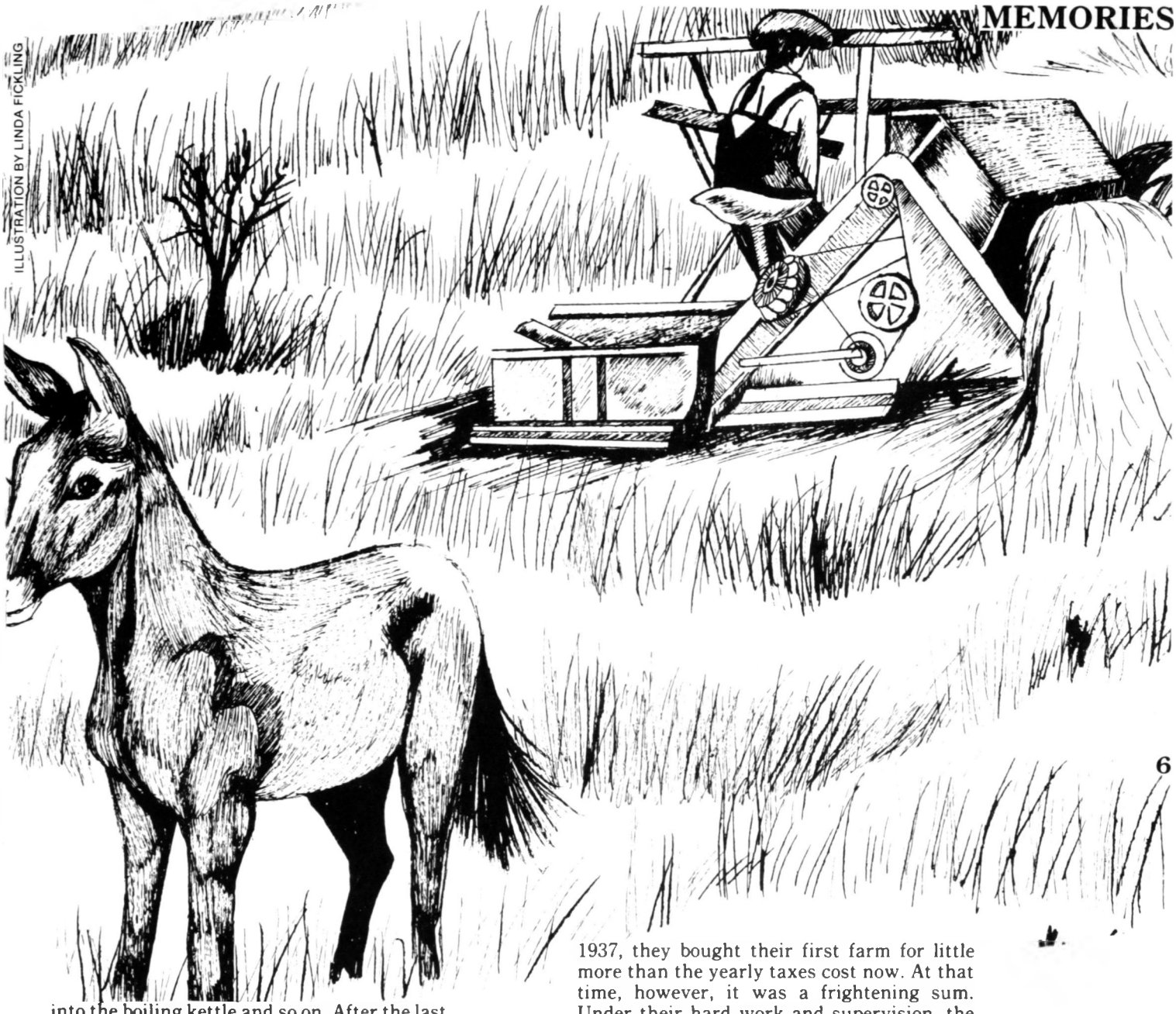


ILLUSTRATION BY LINDA FICKLING

into the boiling kettle and so on. After the last batch of laundry was ready for the clothesline, the rinse water was used to mop the floors in the house. Sad irons, heating on the cookstove, were seldom the right temperature. Straight off the stove, the irons scorched the garments; too long off the stove, they were useless.

During their third summer of marriage, in the middle of wheat harvest, their first child was born. Mother's sister had cooked the noon meal for the threshing crew, and at four o'clock that afternoon, Dr. Allen, who had driven down from Leedey, helped deliver me. The doctor charge $25 for the housecall, and Dad sold a fat heifer and a coop of chickens to pay the bill. It is little wonder that they had only the one child.

By 1935, there was a market for cream. Mother and Dad stored the cream in a five-gallon can which was taken to town to be sold, and the money was used to buy staples that could not be raised on the farm. Occasionally, they bought a luxury item, such as coffee and cocoa or a can of Prince Albert tobacco for Dad. Mostly they saved their money, though, and in 1937, they bought their first farm for little more than the yearly taxes cost now. At that time, however, it was a frightening sum. Under their hard work and supervision, the 320 acres of land on Fox Creek was productive, and under President Roosevelt, the country began to come out of the economic depression.

As the grain prices rose, Mother and Dad used the money to buy more land and cattle. To their household furnishings, they added a telephone, a clock, a radio, and an icebox, and they replaced the wood-burning cookstove with a kerosene stove. But it was not until 1939 that they got electricity. And they had neither running water nor a bathroom until 1953, even though Dad had quit farming when he was thirty-five and had rented his land to his brother.

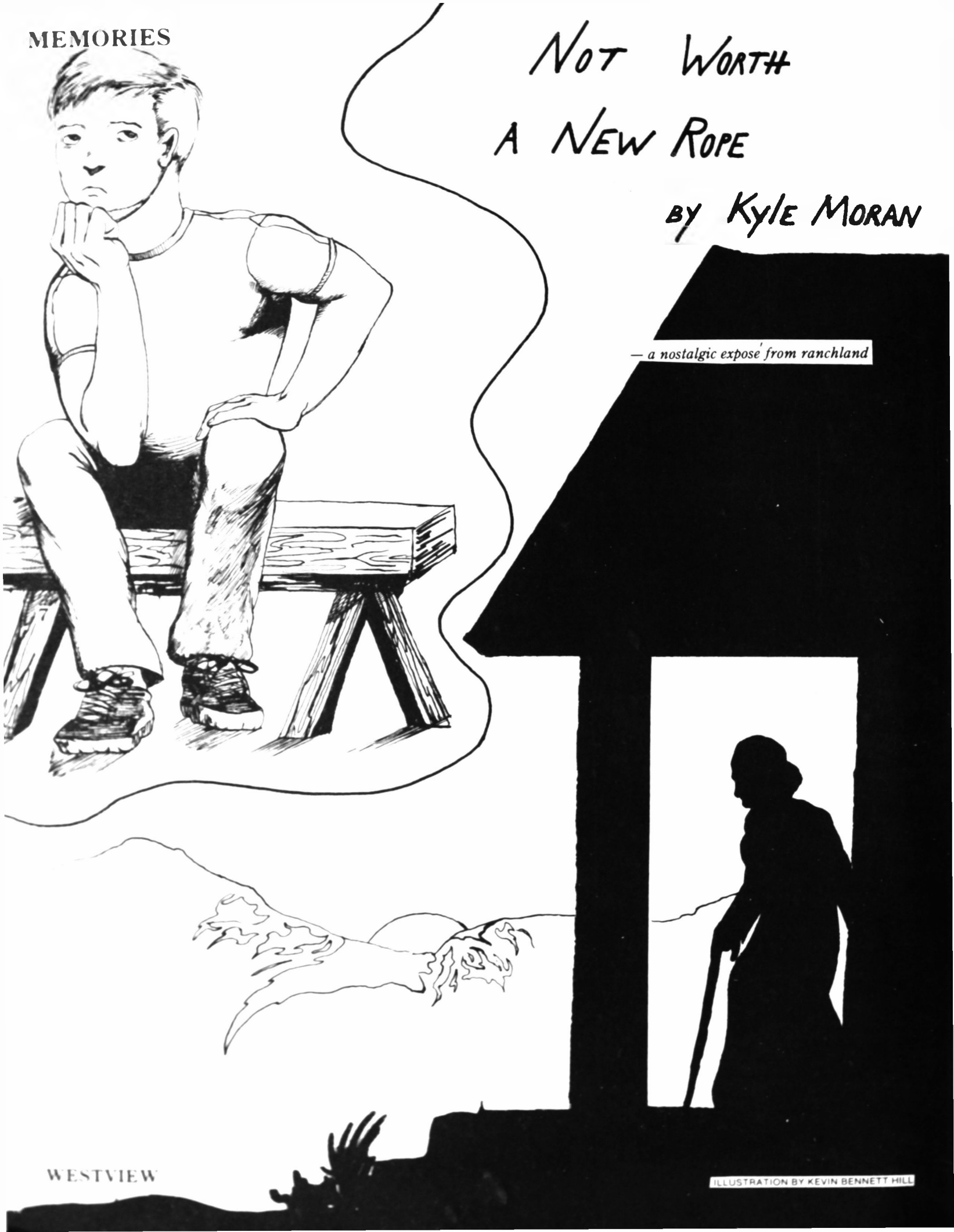
Now, oil wells dot the land where they started out, but they can never forget those years of struggling to survive. Mother still saves scraps of food to warm up and serve at the next meal, and she refuses to use the dishwasher unless they have company for dinner. Dad still cuts his own firewood to burn in the fireplace and raises a big garden for the hard times that he insists are just around the corner.

MEMORIES

NOT WORTH A NEW ROPE

BY KYLE MORAN

— a nostalgic exposé from ranchland



WESTVIEW

ILLUSTRATION BY KEVIN BENNETT HILL

I get the feeling sometimes when they look at me that my mother and two sisters marvel that I turned out worth shooting. And my dad used to have the habit of saying, in keeping with his ranching background, that someone unworthy wasn't worth being "hung with a new rope." I have often wondered when he looked at me incredulously if he might have been thinking the same thing about me. For I, that serious family man of today, am that same brat who at the age of 9 used to fly into a rage if anyone — especially my sisters — walked into a room where I was taking a bath, but who nevertheless often streaked all over the house and yard in their presence. I'm the same one who opened fire at close range with a B-B gun on the upper thigh of my older sister. She still carries the scar 38 years later. And I'm the one who always read all the love letters my other sister received — I'm also the one who as a 4-year-old one day covered my face and body with soot because I had heard that dead people turned black. Then I fell down dead at my mother's feet hoping she would be remorseful about a spanking administered a few minutes earlier. But the trick I played on my maternal grandmother is something that none of my close relatives will ever forget.

Since I always was and still am today very close to my mother, I suppose that I resented my grandmother's interference in our lives. Grandma lived with my family much of the time between my eighth and eleventh years. Since she was not only senile but also epileptic, Mom stayed at home with her most of the time. I didn't accept my mother's dedication because I didn't like the way Grandma kept Mom away from my school activities. And worst of all, Grandma was a complainer.

It may have been Grandma's bad nature that caused me to concoct a scheme that would give her something to complain about. My plan involved an adult-male costume, which during those days was no problem because Mom had stored my deceased grandfather's and uncle's clothes in our shed room. Therefore, on the day I decided to dress up and play the role of the druggist George Johnson, I had a choice of attire. I chose a dark-brown suit and a terrible-looking black hat. I reasoned that I wouldn't need a beard — that Grandma wouldn't know the difference anyway.

A person who wasn't acquainted with our farm would probably park on the highway that passed our property and walk down the lane, so that day I walked down the lane leading to our farmhouse. Our cornpatch which grew between the house and the highway completely concealed the house from passers-by. I had left the house, had run into the cornfield carrying my costume, and had changed clothes between a couple of rows. I knew that Mama was down by the well dressing fryers for lunch, that my dad was in the back field plowing, and that my sisters had gone down the road to visit friends. So Grandma was in the house alone, probably reading her Bible.

I knocked on the kitchen door. Through the screendoor, I could see Grandma squinting at God. Creaking to the door, she peered out through her wire-rim spectacles. "Who's there?"

"How-do. Is that you, Miz Mullins-Martelie?"

"Yessir, it is. With whom am I talking?" Grandma had a refined way of speaking. As all of us grandchildren had been told, she came from good Southern stock, and she had once been the champion speller of her native Tennessee. She seemed a bit taken aback because she wasn't accustomed to being called by her first name.

"Why, Martelie, It's George Johnson. I haven't seen you lately, and I thought I'd try to collect the two dollars you've owed me since Will was sick. Now I don't mean nothin' by it, Ma'am."

"**Anything** by it," Grandma muttered. She was so used to correcting her grandchildren that she thought nothing of correcting an outsider.

"Yessum. I just thought this might be a good time to see you. Do you have the money, or would you like to pay it out?"

"Yes, Mr. Johnson, I have the money. Money is no problem to me. Loneliness — that's the problem. Will left me well fixed. I'll get your two dollars." For the first time I felt sorry for Grandma, and I started to turn and run down the lane.

Grandma went back in the shadows of the kitchen. I knew very well what she was doing and that she would have no qualms about fishing out her little tobacco sack full of money from around her waist underneath her dress and the three or four shimmies she always wore even during hot weather. In her senile state, she would think nothing of thrusting away and pulling up those layers in order to find that valuable sack.

After a while she returned to the door. "Here you are, Mr. Johnson. From now on you can just bill me by mail. Elmer goes to town about once a week. I can give him the money, and he can pay the bill for me."

"Thank you, Martelie. I do appreciate your business."

"Hummph! Old reprobate!" I heard Grandma say to no one in particular as I walked down the lane.

Back in those days, I never knew how Mama found out the things she did about me, but by lunchtime she was brandishing a peachtree limb at me and telling me that I had to apologize to Grandma and give the two dollars back to her.

The apology was difficult to make, but Grandma — slightly out of character — only laughed about it. I never did realize until many years later what a terrible thing I had done — even though it was only a childish prank.

MEMORIES

"Here Bossy, here Bossy."

I couldn't see forever from halfway up the windmill, but I could see most of the pasture and locate the herd. There they were — all nine of them, and that included the calves. "Here Bossy, here Bossy."

They didn't listen to me, a twelve-year-old girl. The old bossy cows just kept on grazing, and I had to go after them; but at least I knew what direction to go. That good and tall windmill saved me many a step. Before that day I thought about climbing it, I used to traipse all over the pasture looking for the cattle. They sometimes were resting in the grove of trees, and sometimes they hid behind the plum thicket.

After jumping down from the last step, I would pick up my stick and hustle off to round up the herd. Just like the postman, come rain or shine, a hundred ten degrees or a blizzard, I had to go get those cows. I hurried on cold winter days. In the summer I sauntered, pretending that the pasture flowers were part of an Austrian meadow until I made my way behind the cattle and then a few, "Hey yas," and waving of my arms and stick and they would fall into a parade line toward the barn. I needed just the two milk cows, but where one went, the rest usually followed. I dropped into the back of the line, and as they chewed their cuds, I chewed bubble gum.

Back at the barn, my ranching chores ended until it was time to use the separator. Mother milked the cows. I wanted to, but she persisted that she didn't want a dried-up cow. So while she milked, I played with the waiting cats or crawled through the hay in the loft.

My sister used to have the cow-finding and bringing-in job, but she got married and moved to town, so the chore fell upon me. At first, it was exciting. I was part of the ranching process, then it got boring, and then I decided it was very unlady-like. Often, on the walk after the cows, I would daydream about living in the city — no chores. No eggs to gather, no separator to turn, no hay to put in the feeders, and no yelling "Hey yas." What a life that would be, but I was stuck. I was too young to marry.

But, my fairy godmother was working on my dream, to change me from a small farm-ranch girl into a city princess. Yes, a couple years later, my daydream did come true. The farm was sold and I too moved to town. And after an education and a marriage, I moved to the big city. I was free at last. No more watching where I stepped in the pasture. No more looking for snakes before I reached into a hen's nest. . . . .No summer breezes gently blowing the windmill wheel. . . . .No wild flowers to pick for the supper table. No trusting milk cows with soft brown eyes and velvet noses. No wobbly baby calves to touch and love. Ahhhhh. . . . .

—a piece of nostalgia from a city woman with good memories of Western Oklahoma ranching—

HERE, BOSSY

— by Patricia Sherman

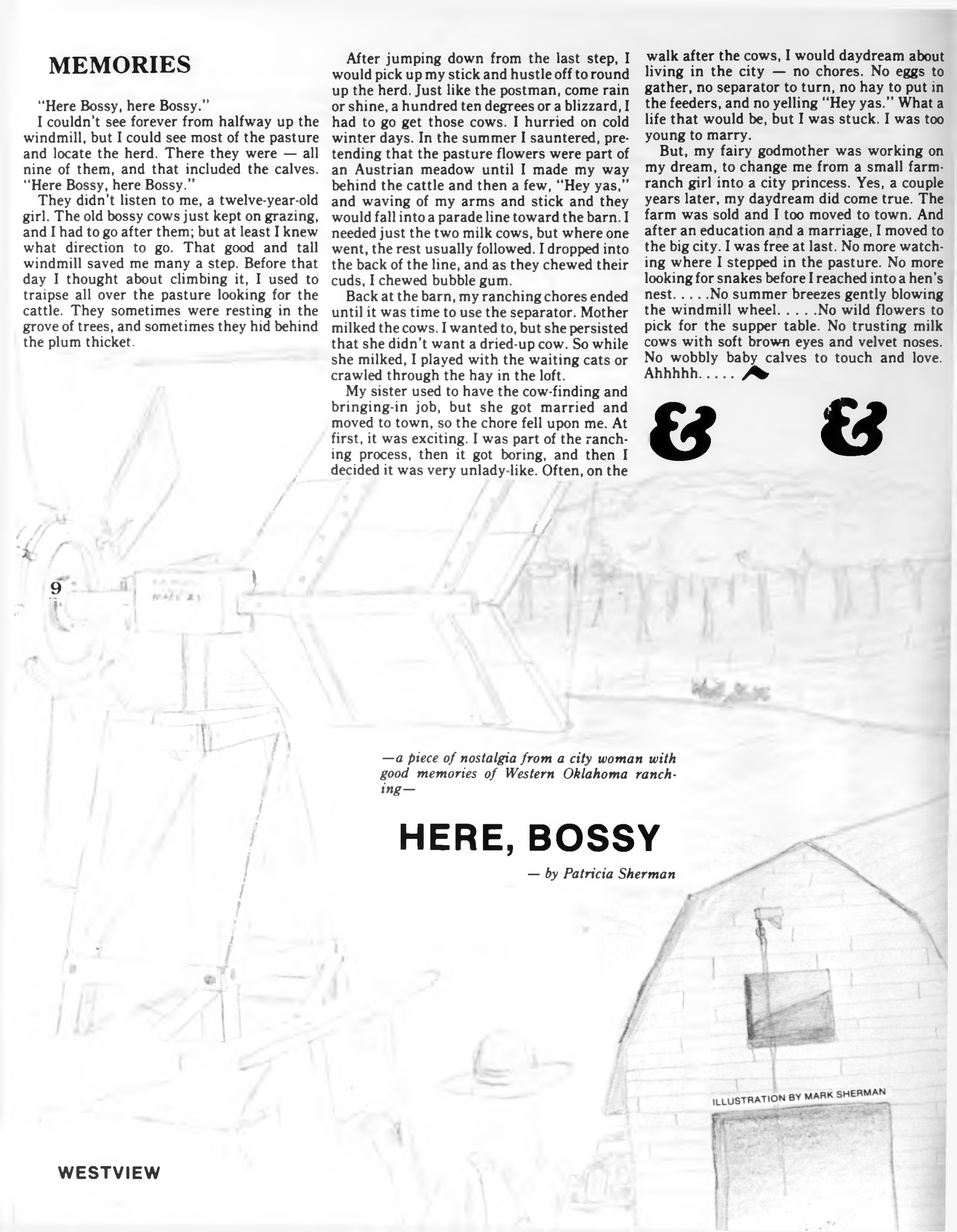


ILLUSTRATION BY MARK SHERMAN

THE OLD SADDLE

— *Charles T. Abernathy*

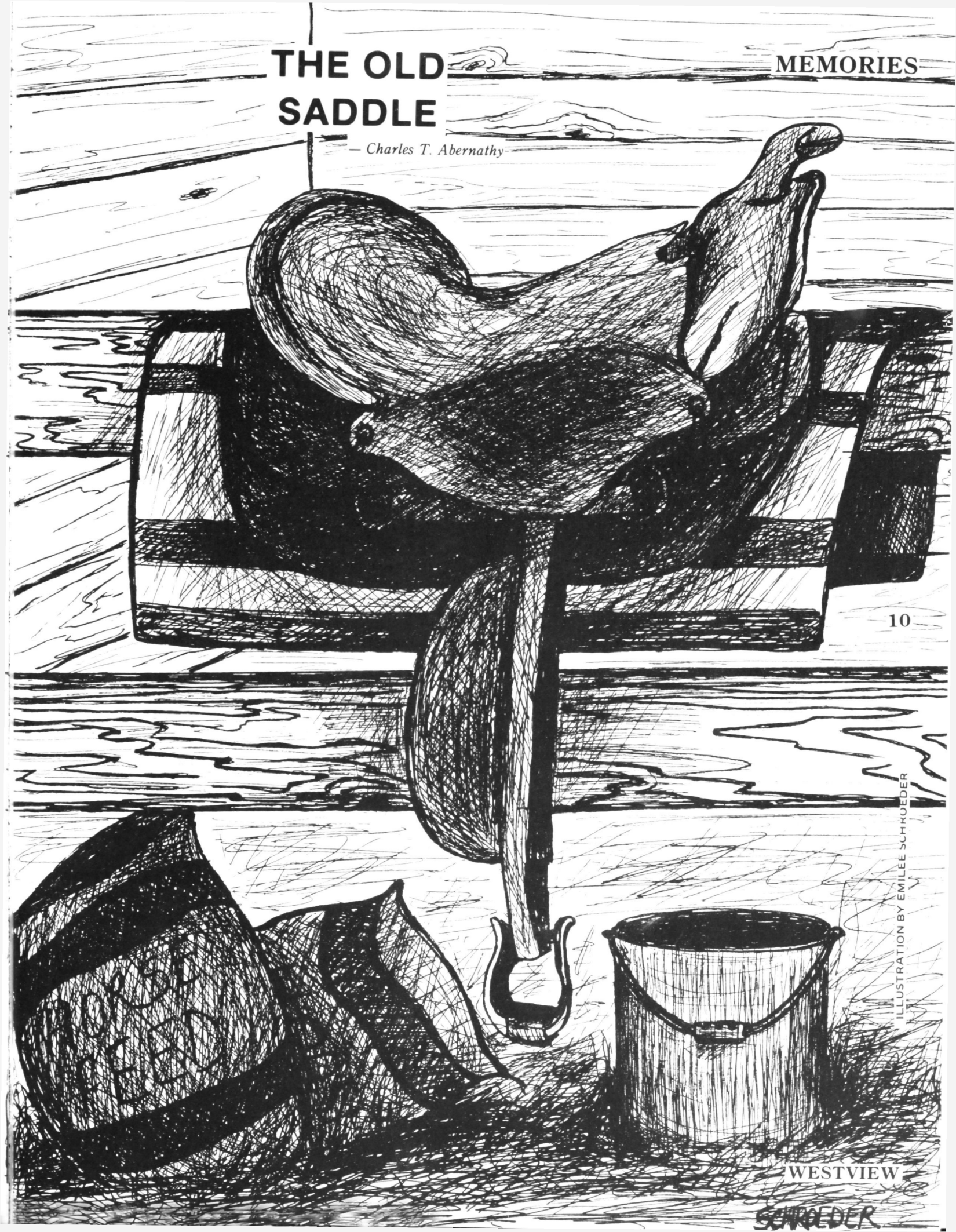


ILLUSTRATION BY EMILEE SCHROEDER

MEMORIES

Isn't it fun remembering those thrilling flights of imagination that brightened our childhood days? Wouldn't it be enjoyable to have a bridge that we as adults could cross and glimpse once again those golden moments of childhood imagination?

There's an old saddle hanging in our tack shed that is my bridge. This is the saddle that carried me to my highest flights of childhood imagination. And it was that old saddle which reintroduced me to the same excitement as an adult. The old saddle has a story to tell, narrated by the men who used it. That story makes a glimpse at childhood excitement possible once again for me.

Like most kids, I daydreamed a lot and had quite an imagination. My imagination was always at its best when we'd ride for pleasure or be horseback doing the chores. Instead of being a plain country boy driving the cows to the lot, I'd be whichever Hollywood cowboy that struck my fancy. I'd be Buck Jones, perhaps, on a trail drive to Dodge City; and those weren't motley white-face I was driving, podnah, they were Texas Longhorns.

Of course, every Hollywood cowboy worth his salt had a fancy saddle, so mine had to be fancy too. It took a lot of liberal imagination to fancy up our saddle to Hollywood standards. It was sweat-stained, scarred, work-worn and patched. There wasn't a trace of silver like Gene Autry had on his saddle, nor was there much tooled leather like Roy Rogers had.

The old saddle stimulated many hours of lively daydreams. Those daydreams were so vivid, in fact, they caused us to miss the real story of the old saddle. We missed our first clue by not listening to the "saddling phrase" so often repeated by the old-timer who owned the saddle.

We were too little to saddle up for ourselves back in the days when the old saddle was the only one we owned. It became a ritual for Grand-dad to carry his saddle out of the barn and get the little buckskin mare ready for us to ride. The ritual was a combination of the even flow of long practiced motion of an old hand swinging a saddle onto a horse's back and the slowly drawled "saddling phrase." As he swung the saddle over the horse he'd say, "This is a real working saddle, boys, the sweat goes in from both sides."

Being young and excited most of the time, we missed a lot of the meaning that phrase had in it. Then too, the Old Timer could nearly hypnotize us with his skill with a horse and saddle. Every move he made with leather on a horse was as practiced and artistic as a ballet. His gnarled rope-calloused hands moved in perfect co-ordination as he hung a stirrup on the polished horn, flipped the cinch strap through the ring, gave it a tug and buckled it into the same hole every time. He'd lead the mare a few steps, then mount with a swing that put him squarely and gracefully in the saddle. From that moment until he dismounted it was impossible to distinguish man from horse. They became as one the instant the Old Timer hit the saddle.

Under those circumstances it's easy to see how we missed the real story of the old saddle. As time passed, though, the meaning of Grand-dad's saddling phrase slowly unfolded as he narrated the history of the old saddle. Down through the years since the old saddle has been retired, the Old Timer has remembered out loud the experiences that made it a "working saddle, boys, with sweat on both sides."

Grand-dad said, "I was working for the XIT Ranch in 1908 when I bought the saddle, a Coughshall brand, hand made in Miles City, Montana. It'd take a lot of explaining to tell how a thirty dollar a month West Texas cowhand came to own a hand made Montana saddle. And it'll take a lot more yarn-spinning to tell where that saddle has been since then, and what it's done. So I supose the best place to start this story is with the XIT Ranch itself.

The XIT Ranch was made up of the three million acre block of land that the State of Texas called the Capitol Reservation Lands. This land had been set aside by the Texas Legislature in the 1870's to be traded to anyone who would build them a State Capitol Building. A group of eastern financiers formed a syndicate and traded the State of Texas a Capitol Building for the land in the 1880's. The syndicate then started the XIT Ranch with that three million acres of Texas Panhandle rangeland, and several thousand head of South Texas Longhorns.

Soon after the title to the land changed hands the syndicate put out a lot of effort just to establish the property boundaries. When the survey was finalized the ranchland had the following description: Syndicate lands lay along the Texas-New Mexico border for roughly 200 miles north and south. The ranch bordered New Mexico at the west boundaries of Dallam, Hartley, Oldham, Deaf Smith, Parmer and a small portion of Baily County, Texas. The eastern boundary wandered through Hockley, Lamb and Castro counties to the south, then through the four northernmost counties already mentioned. The tenth Texas county that contained XIT land was a small corner of Cochran county. The northern boundary of the ranch ran roughly along the state lines separating the Texas and Oklahoma panhandles.

This great expanse of land took in a lot of varied Panhandle geography. Starting at the north boundary near Buffalo Springs rolling plains marched southward to the breaks of the Canadian River. The Canadian cut the ranch from east to west, and presented the stockmen with some peculiar problems all it's own. Rolling plains went south from the Canadian to the Caprock which marked the breaks of the Llano Estacado, or Staked Plains. This topography extended southward and included the bluffs at the south boundary called Las Casitas Amarillas, or Yellow Houses.

I was fresh from the Indian Territory, not yet twenty years old, and very much impressed with the High Plains country. Of course, by the time I came to the XIT the Longhorns had long been replaced with more modern beef breeds. But there were still bands of Antelope and an occasional Loafer Wolf on the XIT.

The country and the wildlife on the vast expanse of the XIT were only a part of the excitement. There was a pride in being a part of the ranch that included ten counties in Texas. That feeling of pride started at the headquarters in Channing, worked it's way through divisions named Rito Blanco, Buffalo Springs, Middle Water, Ojo Bravo, Spring Lake, Escarbada, Bovina, and finally worked it's way right on down to the individual cowhands.

Remember now, that this ranch was as big as some states back east, and bigger than most European countries. It employed the latest techniques in beef production on an immense scale and was the major economic contributor for a large chunk of the Southwest. So there was a great deal of "Chamber of Commerce" pride in the XIT that filtered right on down to me, a former sodbuster from the Territory.

To illustrate that feeling of pride, imagine how I'd feel at age nineteen when ladies at dances or on the street would ask, "Who's that fellow wearing the big hat?", and someone would answer, "Why that's Charley Elston, he rides the rough string for the XIT's." That made me feel pretty big, yes sir, and proud to be a part of the XIT."

Listening to Grand-dad tell his experiences on the XIT, we could almost feel the frosty High Plains sunup when the cowhands would rise from their bedrolls on the ground. We could almost smell the breakfast frying and the coffee boiling on the potrack by the chuckwagon; could almost hear the wiry little cow-ponies greet the sun with spirited snorts and whinnies. We could almost feel the bone-wearying fatigue from long hours in the saddle in boiling heat and freezing cold; could almost hear the slow plod of tired horses as they carried the cowhands back to the chuckwagon at the end of the day. Slowly we began to understand why the Old Timer was proud to be an XIT hand and could truthfully say, "It's a real working saddle, boys, and the sweat goes in from both sides."

We heard stories of nights when our old saddle sat aboard an XIT cow-pony tied to a hitchrail in Old Tascosa while Grand-dad played cards. We heard how our saddle had been used to break horses for the XIT; and a special story of one of those broncs that bucked two silver dollars out of Grand-dad's pocket and was promptly named Two-Dollars.

We heard Grand-dad recall the long distances that separated one part of the ranch from another. Distances on the XIT were long, and to a cowhand on horseback it looked like miles and miles of nothing but miles and miles. Good horses were not only necessary for the work, but also made the difference to the cowhands of dying young or living to a ripe old age. So the recollections of an old cowhand of his XIT experiences soon turned to the subject of horses.

We thrilled to the story of how the cowhands came to call a little horse "Two-Dollars" after they picked up two silver dollars he had bucked out of Grand-dad's pocket. We listened to stories of working cow-ponies with such names as Fiddler, Bay Fiddler, Croppie and Comanche Bill. We heard many times about the stamina those wiry little ponies exhibited as they carried men and saddles over the long

distances on the XIT.

The story that always stirred the most excitement and raised our eyebrows the highest was the one about a Loafer wolf and a cow-pony named Rubberneck. This tale combined the color of the country and the excitement of the cowboy life wrapped up in a chase across the XIT.

The wolf race took place west of Old Tascosa on an interesting part of the XIT range. Between the Alamositas division headquarters which lay just north of the breaks of the Staked Plains, and the Rito Blanco division headquarters north of the Canadian River lay some very interesting country. The breaks of the Canadian's north bank separated the river and the caprock which marked the beginning of a long stretch of rolling prairie. The north boundary of that prairie was the breaks of the Punta de Agua river, a tributary of the Canadian.

This story stirred our imagination because it portrayed a particular excitement found almost exclusively in the life of the American Cowboy. The country was wide and beautiful; the daily work was hard and dangerous. A man's livlihood and even his life depended on his skill as a horseman. Sometimes an incident could combine those ingredients of beautiful country, hard work, danger and horsemanship in such a way that the end result was fun and a stirring glimpse of independence.

Grand-dad related,"There were several of us camped on the Canadian just west of Tascosa. Our camp was what we called a "potrack" outfit, which was just a chuckwagon. We cooked, ate and slept on the ground. Our job was to move the stock out of the rough country along the Canadian river breaks north toward the Rito Blanco headquarters where the country wasn't so rough. We would ride along the edge of the breaks early in the morning and catch the cattle out in the open heading back into the rough country.

Some of the stock preferred the breaks and had been there so long they were downright wild. We'd actually have to rope and tie some of those old mossbacks and then drive a bunch of cows around them before we let them up. If we untied them without a bunch of other cows around them they'd run straight back into the breaks. Those mossbacks would graze out onto the flats at night and the only time we could catch them in the open was at daylight when they'd head back toward the breaks.

Loafer Wolves also liked to live in the breaks and feed out on the flats at night. There were quite a few Loafers on the XIT then, and they posed a definite threat to the herds, especially calves and poor cows. Because of that threat there was a good bounty on wolves. The bounty at that time for a wolf's scalp was as much as a month's wages for a cowhand. The company policy stated that a cowhand's priorities were to eliminate to the best of his ability any threat to the livestock. So we took that to mean we could chase Loafer Wolves at any time with the company's full blessing.

Early one morning we had all spread out along the edge of the breaks to turn the cattle. I was riding a little XIT pony named Rubberneck. Each hand got to pick his own string of horses from the remuda, with first pick going to the older hands. I had four or five good horses in my string but old Rubberneck was always my first choice. He was the best horse for the early morning job of running and roping the mossbacks. Rubberneck had the same heart you see in a good coursing hound and it was obvious he enjoyed a good chase. He would keep his eyes pinned on whatever was running ahead of him, turning his head with every move like cutting horses are trained to do now. That's why we came to name him Rubberneck.

Just about daylight I saw a Loafer heading across the flats toward the breaks. The wolves would feed at night and lay up in the daytime to sleep off a big feed of XIT beef. Sometimes they were easy to catch after a big gorge the night before. Two of us had easily roped one down on the Alamositas after he'd fed too heavily the night before. But I could tell that the wolf heading toward the breaks in front of Rubberneck and I this morning was not going to be so easily caught. He was lean and lively as he broke into a lope when he saw us coming between him and the rough country.

Rubberneck picked up the chase instantly, blocking the wolf's dash to safety. I gave him full rein, talked to him a little, and he turned the wolf back out onto the flat heading north toward open country at a dead run. The caprock and the breaks were behind us as we headed toward the ten mile stretch of open country that ended at the breaks of the Punta de Agua.

A wolf can outrun a horse for several miles, but they can be caught. There's a right way to catch a wolf from horseback, and a way to kill a horse chasing one. Rubberneck had the desire and ability to catch that wolf in a relatively short distance. But I knew he'd kill himself doing it, and there was no need to do that. We had ten miles of open country ahead of us to run that wolf, and we were going to do it right.

Rubberneck lined out behind the wolf in a gallop that was leaving a trail of dust hanging in the morning air. I eased him back to a long lope, talked to him some and watched him pin his eyes on that wolf like a bird-dog on quail. He had an intensity for this chase written all over him, and would obviously run himself to death to catch his quarry. I knew it was going to be a hard morning's work to keep him down to the five or ten miles of high lope that would tire the wolf.

The wolf did his part to set the stage for a good morning's drama. He was the epitome of the wild freedom of this High Plains setting as he covered the ground easily with long graceful strides. Powerful shoulders sloped back to slim hindquarters. Muscles grown to their prime bunched and rippled causing ray's of West Texas sunrise to glisten and shine on thick fur. Long white teeth gleamed in the wolf's massive jaws as he glanced back at us occasionally. No fear showed in any of his actions. He was running, but obviously felt he was master of the situation just as he was master of this wild country that was his home.

On and on we went, covering fast disappearing ground in a high easy lope. Three miles passed, then five. We were slowly gaining on the wolf, and the horse never lessened his bird-dog intensity. The distance closed as the wolf began to tire on a long slope of rising ground. We would be within roping distance when we reached the top of that rise, so I took down my lariat and began to build a loop.

Rubberneck knew well the meaning of the sound of rope swinging in the air. Excitement of the chase radiated from him as we began to close on the wolf. We topped the rise and saw the wolf take on a renewed burst of speed as the breaks of the Punta de Agua suddenly came into view.

Feeling the powerful surge as Rubberneck broke into a run close behind the wolf I swung the loop for the only throw I'd have. The wolf was only one or two long strides from freedom when the loop snaked over his neck. He twisted and leaped as the rope circled him. Rubberneck dug his heels into the ground as I jerked the slack, tightening the loop firmly on the wolf.

Standing on the caprock of the Punta de Agua breaks in the middle of a West Texas High Plains grandeur I felt a sadness for the passing of the wolf. The echo of the heavy blast from the Colt's rolled into the vastness of the breaks as I watched the sun glisten from the wind ruffled fur. The powerful creature that ruled this land lay dead at my feet there on the rise overlooking his wild domain.

Hearing the horse's movement behind me, I turned and the feeling of awe and sadness for the wolf passed from me. Seeing Rubberneck's expression as he slowly moved to my side washed all regret from my mind. We stood side by side for a long moment, savoring our triumph as we stared at our conquered adversary. Feeling an elation I'd never before experienced, I hugged that horse's lathered neck. He pawed a time or two and said he liked this too by giving his head a couple of spirited bounces in spite of his exhaustion."

Through the years as we heard the true story of our old saddle unfold we came to understand Grand-dad's "saddling phrase" more fully. We realized that there was a real excitement in the story of the saddle which lent in time a sense of perspective to our flights of childhood imagination. This experience has provided us with a bridge between the real and the imagined excitement. It's left us something of real value, a legacy wrapped up in a phrase and an old saddle.

— A leading Western Oklahoma historian reveals a little-known story about ranching

A Reservation Cattle Ranch (1882 - 1885)

— by Patt Hodge

A few years following the close of the Civil War, the cattle industry grew in importance and many large ranches were established in Texas and the Indian Territory. Few people have heard of the largest ranch that ever existed in Oklahoma, the Cheyenne-Arapaho Cattle Ranch, 1882-1885.

The Cheyenne-Arapaho Reservation had long been sought by cattlemen. The reservation with its prime grass covered about 4,300,000 acres and had been set aside for the Cheyenne-Arapaho Indians in 1869. About 3,500 Indians lived on the reservation; two-thirds were Cheyenne, and one-third were Arapaho. The Cheyenne and Arapaho Agency was located at Darlington, not far from Ft. Reno. In charge of the Indian Agency was John D. Miles.

PHOTO BY DEE ANN RAY

L. E. Hodge, Jr., Patt Hodge, Lt. Gov. and Mrs. Spencer Bernard at the dedication of the C-A cattle Ranch as a listing on the National Register — April, 1981

On December 12, 1882, the chiefs and warriors of the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribe met in public council, with the agent, John D. Miles, and Edward Fenlon, long time cattleman. Edward Fenlon made the proposition to lease 2,004,000 acres at two cents an acre for ten years. Half of the money was to be used in buying cattle for the starving Indians. The request was forwarded to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. A second meeting was held on January 8, 1883 with the chiefs. Agent Miles gave the go-ahead for the agreement with the cattlemen even though he had not received authorization from the Commissioner. The agreement was signed by sixteen Cheyenne chiefs and nine Arapaho chiefs.

A corporation was formed, called the Cheyenne-Arapaho Cattle Company, with R. W. Raymond, New York City as president, A. F. Childs, New York City, Calvin Hood, banker from Emporia, Kansas, William E. Malaley, Caldwell, Kansas, Hampton B. Denman, Washington, D. C. and Edward Fenlon, Leavenworth, Kansas, were stockholders. Fenlon would serve as ranch manager.

Other leesees were Albert G. Evans and Robert D. Hunter, St. Louis, Missouri, and Lewis M. Briggs, Muscotah, Kansas.

Fenlon was a good selection for the ranch manager, as he had been in the cattle business fifteen years. He had been a government contractor and had freighted goods from the end of the railroad, at Caldwell, Kansas, to the Cheyenne-Arapaho, Kiowa, and Wichita Agencies. During the Civil War, he had served as postmaster for Leavenworth, Kansas.

The Cheyenne-Arapaho Cattle Ranch was also called the C. & A. Ranch or the "Apple Ranch." One of the brands used was in the shape of an apple. The ranch was located in the northwest part of Western Oklahoma and included part of Custer and Roger Mills counties and all of Dewey and Ellis counties. The lease shows the ranch was bounded on the west by the Texas line, the south boundary was the Washita River, the east line was the Western Cattle trail, and the north boundary was the south side of the Cherokee Strip.

The ranch was managed from three locations. The main headquarters, where all the business was transacted, was located at the mouth of the Quartermaster Creek and the Washita River, six miles northeast of the present Hammon, Oklahoma. Three log houses and large corrals were built at this location. The second site was near the Antelope Hills on Commission Creek. The third and smallest location was on Turkey Creek, west of the present town of Camargo.

The first payment to the Indians, $30,000 in silver, was brought to Darlington by Edward Fenlon, The money came from Peter Cooper, well-known American inventor, manufacturer, and philanthropist. Cooper was the inventor of the first American steam locomotive, the "Tom Thumb." He was the founder of the Cooper Union, an important center for free instruction in art and science in New York City. Cooper died shortly after the ranch was started, but his estate continued financing the ranch.

From the very beginning, the C. & A. Ranch had nothing but trouble. Cattlemen on the reservation, who had no agreements, refused to move their herds. A small band of indians, who had not signed the lease did not approve of it, began to cause trouble. By 1884, the cattlemen on the reservation had lost $100,000 and, added to the grass payment, made the cattle business anything but profitable.

The Department of the Interior had at last replied to the issue of grazing upon Indian Territory. The department did not recognize any lease or agreement with the C. & A. Ranch. Other ranchers made arrangements with the Indians, who did not sign the C. & A. lease, and moved their cattle onto the range.

About this time a group of Indians left the reservation, causing further trouble for Agent Miles. The C. & A. boundary lines were questionable by other cattlemen. There had been a rumor that Agent Miles had received a large sum of money from Edward Fenlon for help in securing the C. & A. lease. The rumor was not true, but nevertheless, John D. Miles resigned as Indian Agent on April 1, 1884.

For more than ten years Agent Miles had served the Indian tribes with honesty and fairness. The agent sent to succeed him, D. B. Dryer, did not have the experience for such a difficult job. As disorder and depredation increased, Agent Dryer sent calls for troops between May and August.

In December, 1884, Agent Dryer went to Washington to request more aid. He stated that conditions were worse than ever before and could be checked only by military force.

On March 4, 1885, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs requested the Secretary of the Interior to ask the War Department to put enough troops on the Cheyenne-Arapaho reservation to preserve peace. He also asked that Agent Dryer be replaced and that the Indians be disarmed and all leases be annulled and all the cattlemen and their herds be removed from the reservation.

On July 10, 1885, President Cleveland asked Lt. General Sheridan to go to Darlington and take charge. In Sheridan's report to the President, he stated there were about 210,000 head of cattle on the reservation and that the ranchers had complied with their agreement but the Indians had cost the ranchers many cattle by killing cattle anytime they happened to need food.

President Cleveland issued a proclamation that all leases on the Cheyenne-Arapaho reservation were void, and that persons on these lands were there unlawfully, and that they must move within forty days all cattle and other property.

More than 210,000 head of cattle were removed from the Cheyenne-Arapaho reservation. The cattle were placed on range that had already been overstocked, and many were lost that winter. The removal of the ranchers from the reservation was the beginning of the decline of the cattle market. The winter of 1886-87 was financially disastrous for almost all cattlemen who had cattle on the Great Plains.

The C. & A. Cattle Ranch was in existence but a short time, but it was one of the great ranches of the plains. The C. & A. Cattle Company lost millions of dollars in their gamble against two elements, nature and the range. Seven years later, in 1892, the reservation was opened for settlement to the white man.

A modern-generation Beutler tells an interesting story about pro-rodeo.

The Most Renowned Pro-Rodeo Stock Contractors

— by Randy Beutler

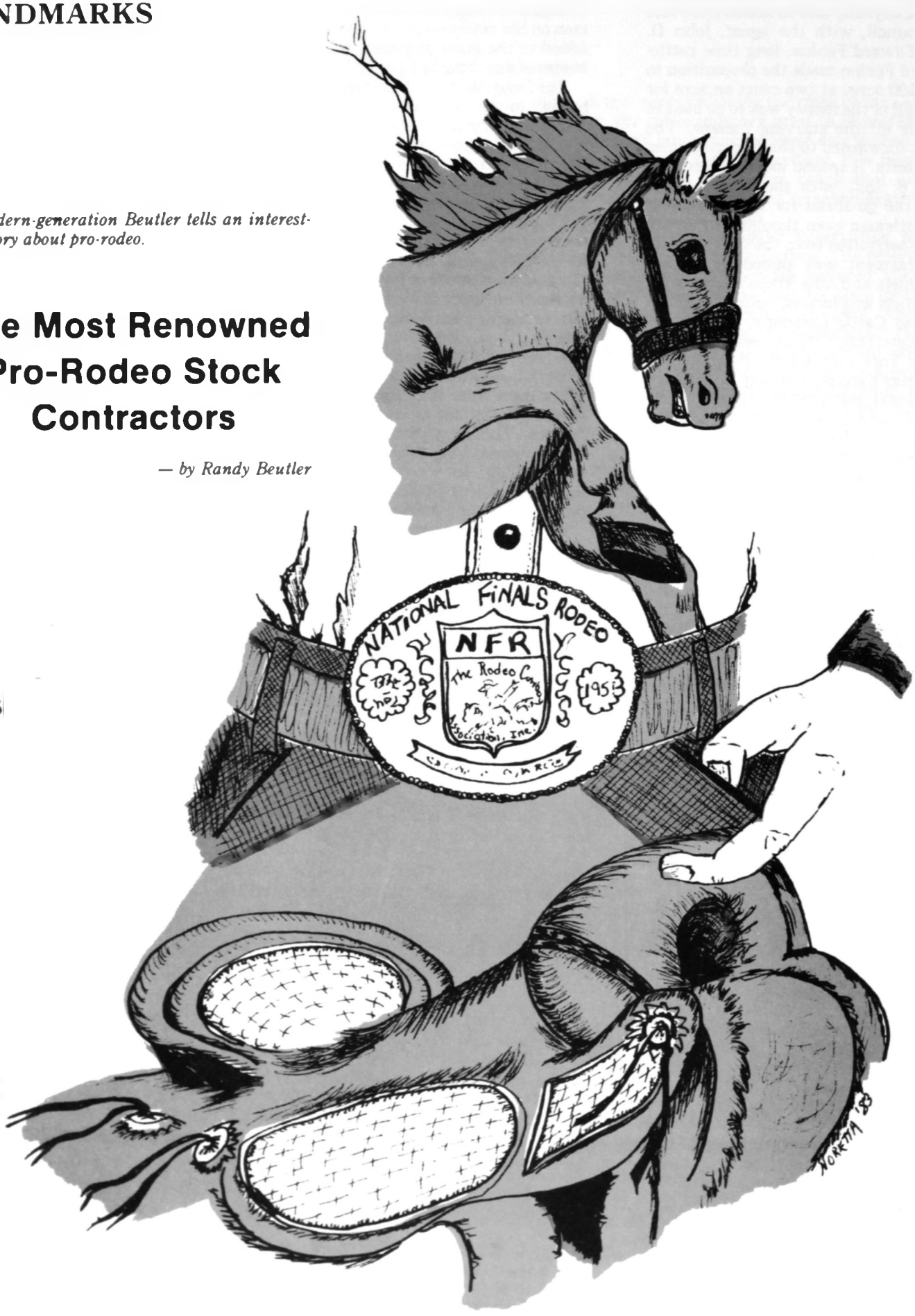


ILLUSTRATION BY NORETTA WILLIAMS

In 1897, Cheyenne, Wyoming held its first Frontier Days celebration and a legend was reborn. It was the legend of the American cowboy, who wrestled calves and broke broncs for a small, measly wage to sustain himself. During the late 1800's, ranch hands competed with one another in the skills they used for a living. But when the open ranges were fenced, the cowhand became a dream that faded into the memory of the public through dime novels and tall tales.

When this cattle drover vanished from the scene, a predecessor remained who kept his spirit alive in a sport to become known as rodeo. Now, this rodeo athlete depends on the stock he draws and abilities he has in either riding, roping, or wrestling an animal for prize money.

The public enjoyed this new, rough sport, and with the request of more rodeos came the demand for more stock. Thus was born the rodeo stock producer, whose roots stem from the old Wild West shows of the turn of the century. He provided the means to have a rodeo and was often as colorful and intriguing as the person who rode the stock.

There have been many great stock producers during the early years of rodeo such as C. B. Irwin, Col. William T. Johnson, Ed McCarthy, and Verne Elliott. But probably the most renowned stock contractors during the building years of pro-rodeo were the Beutler Brothers of Elk City, Oklahoma.

The three members of this famous group consisted of Elra, Jake, and Lynn Beutler. They came from a family of ten children whose parents were John N. and Maggie Beutler.

John Beutler made the land run into Oklahoma in 1889 and settled on a farm west of Okarche. While there, he farmed wheat and hauled cedar posts for a living. On October 19, 1897, Elra was born on this farm; and six years later on February 23, Jake was born.

In 1903, John moved his family to a ranch five miles north of present-day Elk City. Here on January 17, 1905, Lynn was born. During this time John farmed wheat, but mostly dealt in trading cattle and horses.

The Beutlers' rodeo interest was sparked in 1922 when Lynn attended his first rodeo at Canadian, Texas. He decided then that he would rather be an arena director than President of the United States.

The three brothers entered the rodeo business in 1929, when they were asked to provide ten of their bucking horses, which they used on the farm, for the Clinton rodeo. They trailed the horses to Clinton and back for $150, which was a large amount of money during the depression.

In 1934, the city of El Reno held an '89er celebration and rodeo. The Beutler Brothers got the contract to provide the stock and thus launched their careers in the rodeo business.

The Beutlers got their first "big" contract in 1935, when they supplied stock for the Oklahoma State Fair in Oklahoma City. That same year they also sent stock to the Tri-State Fair in Amarillo, Texas. Both rodeos were a week long and brought in good money to the newly started rodeo company.

After these rodeos, the Beutlers built up their reputation for fine stock and received contracts for rodeos in towns such as Cleo Springs, Woodward, Guymon, Buffalo, Mangum, and Elk City.

PHOTO — PROPERTY OF RANDY BEUTLER

The Beutler Brothers — Elra, Jake, and Lynn

Later their rodeos grew to larger and more distant cities like El Paso, Tucson, Albuquerque, Lubbock, Phoenix, Tulsa, North Platte (Nebraska), Vernon (Texas), Monte Vista (Colorado), and Monroe (Louisiana.)

These were very large and popular rodeos, but at this time the largest outdoor rodeo in the United States was the Cheyenne Frontier Days at Cheyenne, Wyoming. It was produced by a former actor in Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, Verne Elliott. Elliott, otherwise known as "Mr. Rodeo," was one of the largest stock producers in the nation at that time.

Lynn Beutler visited the Cheyenne rodeo every year, and on one such visit in 1952, he learned that Elliott was considering selling out his rodeo company. Lynn talked to Verne, and he struck a deal to buy out the veteran producer for $65,000.

With the Elliott deal, the Beutler Brothers received contracts for many of Verne's large rodeos like the Fat Stock Show in Fort Worth, Denver's National western Stock Show, and the Cheyenne Frontier Days. This made the Beutlers one of the foremost stock producers in America.

The Beutler Brothers received contracts for many more famous rodeos such as the Snake River Stampede in Nampa, Idaho, the Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo in Colorado Springs, the Montana State Fair rodeo in Great Falls, and the Tennessee State Fair in Memphis. The brothers kept collecting rodeos until they had twenty-two of the finest shows in the United States.

In February, 1953, while the Beutlers were producing the Tucson rodeo, they signed a contract to provide stock for a movie entitled ARENA. It starred Gig Young, Robert Horton, Barbara Lawrence, and Harry Morgan and was filmed during the Tucson rodeo. The Beutlers were paid $17,000 for the stock and labor, and they also had a small part in the movie.

Later they also provided stock for the movie BUS STOP with Marilyn Monroe and Don Murray. In 1980, Lynn helped with the rodeo scenes in the comedy STIR CRAZY, starring Gene Wilder and Richard Pryor.

In 1954, Elra left the rodeo company to farm. Lynn and Jake bought out their older brother's share for $50,000. But, a year later Elra, his son Jiggs, and Buster Morgan formed a stock-producing company which was known as Beutler and Morgan, Rodeo Producers. They produced rodeos under that name until 1959, when Elra and Jiggs bought out Morgan and formed their own rodeo company called Elra Beutler and Son.

Om the late 1950's, Mr. C. A. Reynolds, Chairman of the H. D. Lee Company, and Lynn Beutler devised a plan to enliven and promote professional rodeo. Their idea was to take the top fifteen cowboys in each event and the best stock from the contractors and hold a "world series" of rodeo. The event, which is now known as the National Finals Rodeo, started in 1959, at Dallas, Texas, and has now grown into one of the greatest sporting events of the year. As former rodeo announcer Pete Pogan wrote in THE WORLD OF RODEO, "It would be entirely fitting and proper to say that Lynn Beutler is the Father of the National Finals Rodeo."

In keeping up their many rodeos, the Beutler Brothers bought most of their bucking stock from stock suppliers and several different rodeo companies throughout the country. On one occasion in 1964, they bought a string of five horses from a stock supplier in Montana. Little did they know at that time that one of these horses, Descent, would become one of the greatest bucking horses in rodeo history. Descent won the "Bucking Horse of the Year" award six times starting in 1966. According to Lynn Beutler, "That's a record that might not be beaten in a long time. I think it will go down in history." Descent is now retired at the Prorodeo Hall of Champions in Colorado Springs.

After nearly forty years in the rodeoing business, Jake and Lynn decided to retire in 1967. At this time the Beutler Brothers' company consisted of approximately six hundred head of livestock, eight thousand acres of Western Oklahoma grassland, and some of the finest rodeos in America, including Belle Fourche, South Dakota; Las Vegas, Nevada; and the Texas State Fair at Dallas.

The Beutlers sold their rodeo company to Mike Cervi of Sterling, Colorado, and Harry Vold of De Winton, Alberta, Canada, for approximately a half-million dollars. Jake and Lynn stayed with the new company, which was now known as Beutler Brothers, Vold, and Cervi, for a couple of years to supervise the changeover. Later Vold got out of the merger. When Lynn and Jake sold out, the Beutler Brothers' name stayed with the rodeo company and is today known as Beutler Brothers and Cervi.

Jake Beutler died in March, 1975, after undergoing major surgery. Today Lynn Beutler lives in retirement at his home in Carpenter, north of Elk City.

The rodeo company Elra and Jiggs Beutler started, called Beutler and Son, started out slow, but soon received many nationally known rodeos in towns such as Pampa, Texas; North Platte, Nebraska; Phillipsburg, Kansas; and Burwell, Nebraska.

In 1959, at the age of 65, Elra was chosen as the pickup man for the first National Finals. Seven other people applied for the job and Elra received more votes from the cowboys than the other six persons combined. He was also chosen the next year as pickup man for the 1960 NFR.

Beutler and Son had acquired some of the roughest stock in rodeo at this time. One of their Brahma bulls, Speck, was named "Bucking Bull of the Year" in 1959 and 1960. During Speck's first five years of bucking, he was ridden only once out of 103 tries.

Some famous Beutler and Son saddle broncs have been Tom Dooley; Nowata; Payola; Wild Bill; Short Grass, the 1976 "2nd Bet Saddle Bronc"; and Sam Bass, the 1973 "Bucking Horse of the Year."

Elra and Jiggs expanded to larger and better rodeos in cities like Galveston, New Orleans, Austin, The Astrodome in Houston, the Cow Palace in San Francisco, San Antonio, Lubbock, and Honolulu.

Besides producing several rodeos in different states, Beutler and Son have also contracted many Oklahoma rodeos such as the Oklahoma State Fair rodeo; the Rodeo of Champions in Elk City; the Woodward Elks Rodeo; the Hinton Rodeo; the Pioneer Rodeo in Chickasha; the Tulsa State Fair Rodeo; and the 101 Memorial Rodeo in Ponca City.

Bennie Beutler, Jiggs' sonk, joined Beutler and Son in the early 1970's. He was the third generation member of this company.

On January 20, 1980, Jiggs was injured in a farm equipment accident. He died the next day in an Oklahoma City hospital at the age of 55. He had served as a paratrooper during World War II in the famed 82nd Airborne Division.

Elra had still been active with the rodeo company at the time of Jiggs' death. He then gradually turned the reins of the company over to Bennie, his grandson.

At the age of 85 and with over fifty years in the rodeo business, Elra was inducted into the National Cowboy Hall of Fame's Rodeo Hall of Fame in December 1982. He now lives in retirement on his farm north of Elk City.

Today many large rodeos are still produced with stock under the Beutler name — a name which is associated with some of the finest rodeos and roughest bucking stock in professional rodeo history.

Groendyke Success Story

— *by Della Barnwell Whisenhunt*

The Groendyke Ranch, subject of this article, is fifteen miles from Weatherford as the crow flies but about forty miles by highway and country road.

It was my privilege to tour the Groendyke Ranch near Watonga, Oklahoma in November, 1982. Harold C. Groendyke, the owner, had been a classmate and fellow-football player with my husband at Panhandle A. and M. College (now Panhandle State University) in the late twenties.

Groendyke had invited a group of his former classmates and their spouses to visit him at his ranch during a reunion the group was having at Roman Nose State Lodge near Watonga. All of us graciously accepted his invitation and drove out to the ranch where Groendyke's beautiful and friendly dogs assisted their owner in welcoming us.

The ranch is a spread of 10,000 acres on which graze 1500 head of cattle including breeds of Angus, Brahma, and Hereford.

The land of the ranch is rolling and picturesque Oklahoma prairie with clumps of trees here and there. The trees were in autumn colors when we were there.

The ranch house is imposing; in every room there are Oklahoma memorabilia comparable to those found in museums. All are tastefully displayed, and all have a story which the owner is glad to supply. He is proud of his heritage; his selection of artifacts shows that he searched long and hard and was extremely fastidious. His favorites are those used by his own forebears.

Other buildings on the Groendyke Ranch are seven houses occupied by the families of the men who carry on the ranch work, two guest houses, and several barns, sheds, and shops. A missile from Vance Air Force Base at Enid serves as an identifying marker near the entrance.

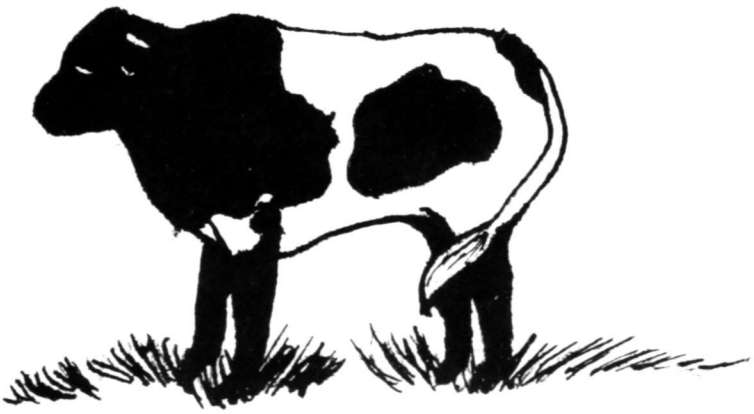


ILLUSTRATION BY JUDITH BOLLINGER

Groendyke is the creator of the Groendyke Transport Co. It was on July 12, 1932, that he delivered a load of bulk fuel to Beaver, Oklahoma from Borger, Texas. From that one-truck operation his business grew to be what is now one of the largest tank-truck common carriers in the United States. According to statistics listed on the inside front cover of the 1982 Rand McNally Atlas published by the Groendyke Transport Inc., his present operation is made up of 950 employees operating a fleet of 750 tractors and 950 trailers some 60 million miles annually from a network of 42 terminals, not only in the United States but also in Canada and Mexico.

Fifty years later, Groendyke's innovations and personal involvement continue to contribute to the future of the transportation industry. It is easy to identify his trucks as the name "Groendyke" appears in large letters on either side of the tanks and also the cab doors.

Groendyke is now semi-retired; thus, he spends much of his time at his ranch, which is his hobby. The headquarters of his company are in Enid, where his son John Groendyke manages the business.

Before the group left the Groendyke Ranch on that morning of November 20, 1982, their host gave to each couple one of his 1982 Atlasses, which he autographed, and to each person a gold ballpoint pen.

In summation, my husband and I put our lists of adjectives together and came up with the following attributes of Harold C. Groendyke:

He is innovative, aggressive, kind, generous, jovial, friendly, unselfish, and unaffected. In addition, we think he is surely a person who has made a great contribution to his age. His Alma Mater must be proud of him.

PHOTO BY KATHERINE DICKEY

on the Groendyke Ranch —

PHOTO BY KATHERINE DICKEY

Harold Groendyke

— a transition article —

THE WAYNOKA CONNECTION

— Phil Ewing Gafford

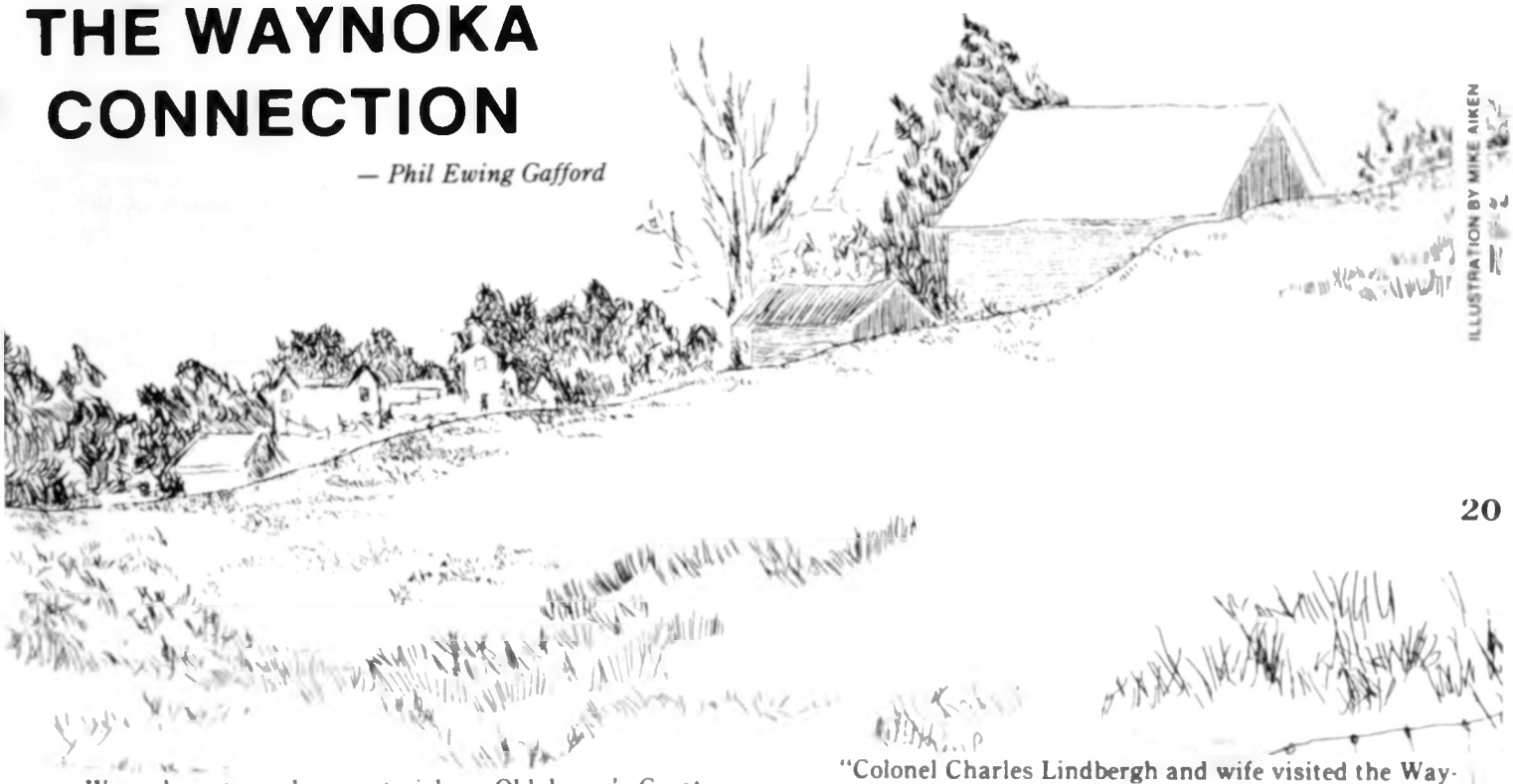


ILLUSTRATION BY MIKE AIKEN

Waynoka rates only an asterisk on Oklahoma's Great Plains Package. But this Woods County Community deserves higher acclaim. It was the hub of a stranger-than-fiction connection that marked a revolutionary transition in transportation history.

Waynoka was the mid-point of the 1929 honeymoon of two unusual partners in marriage, a tin goose and an iron horse. The union gave birth to a transcontinental travel dream, New York to Los Angeles in 48 hours.

Passengers flew by day in an all-metal Ford Tri-motor, the historic "Tin Goose," and rode by night in a Pullman behind a coal-burning locomotive, the legendary "Iron Horse." The Waynoka connection was half way in the coast-to-coast route, home of an evening plane-to-train transfer for westbound passengers and a morning tram-to-plane transfer eastbound.

Born in July, 1929, the baby lived only 15 months. Waynoka's vision of becoming the world's transportation center died with it. History, however is likely to look kindly on this little town. It was part of the leading edge of an unprecedented avalanche of aeronautical development that exploded in a short seven-year span, 1929 to 1936.

Will Rogers and Charles Lindbergh played prominent parts in the imaginative plane-train venture.

Rogers made at least one test flight on the transcon route as well as frequent other trips. Although never employed by Transcontinental Air Transport airline or Santa Fe railroad, Rogers was an active "ambassador" in suport of the service.

Lindbergh was employed as chairman of TAT's technical committee by the line's founder, Clement M. Keys, financier and former editor of The Wall Street Journal. Keys sought to capitalize on the aviation boom that followed Lindy's 1927 trans-Atlantic flight.

Lindbergh directed selection of routes, equipment and pilot personnel. He specifically chose Waynoka as the central office for the bold experiment, supervising investment of almost $1,000,000 in TAT's base five miles northeast of town. TAT was dubbed the "Lindbergh Line," and his picture was included in advertisements.

"Colonel Charles Lindbergh and wife visited the Waynoka airport last Friday and inspected the field while his plane was being refuled (sic) and made ready for their further flight westward, bound on an inspection tour of the T.A.T. - Maddux air route," reported the Woods County Enterprise issue of January 10, 1930.

While the Waynoka paper occasionally noted Lindbergh items, his visits became too frequent to make news.

"I saw Will Rogers and Charles Lindbergh often on the streets of Waynoka," recalled area native Garold Whitlaw, now a prominent Oklahoma executive.

"Just out of Waynoka high school, I was part of the town's boom. I remember the crowds at the Fred Harvey house. My senior class had its prom there. It was a place for the 'elite 400' with more silverware and big heavy napkins and table cloths than I've ever seen anywhere."

Whitlaw remains very much part of the Waynoka connection, spending most weekends at his plush home on one of two large Whitlaw-owned ranches.

First trip of the Tin Goose-Iron Horse marriage began at 6:05 P.M., Saturday, July 7, 1929. Passengers departed New York on a Pennsylvania train, leaving it the next morning after breakfast at Columbus, Ohio. They crossed the tracks, climbed into a Ford Trimotor and took off for the Waynoka connection with intermediate stops at Indianapolis, St. Louis, Kansas City and Wichita.

Arriving Waynoka 12 minutes ahead of the 6:24 p.m. schedule Sunday, July 8, the passengers were transported by bus to the Fred Harvey Home restaurant at the Santa Fe depot. Following dinner, they boarded a Pullman attached to the railroad's "Missionary" special to Clovis.

Clovis arrival time was 7:20 the next morning. Passengers breakfasted at the Harvey House there before being driven six miles to Santa Fe's Gallaher station, now site of Cannon Air Force base, for an 8:10 a.m. departure to Los Angeles. The day's flight included stops at Albuquerque, Winslow and Kingman before its scheduled arrival in Los Angeles at 5:52 p.m.

The eastbound trip was by air from Los Angeles to Clovis, Pullman from Clovis to Waynoka, air to Columbus and Pullman to New York.

P. Hicks Daniel, Santa Fe retiree who in 1912 was the railroad's first agent at Heman six miles southwest of Waynoka, remembered his later work as traveling agent out of the Amarillo general offices.

"I went monthly from Amarillo to St. Louis and back in the '29 - '30 period. My return was on the Missionary, meeting the air-train-air passengers in the evening at Waynoka. The train conductor or brakeman inquired in advance how many passen-gers wanted meals at the Harvey House, and that information was 'wired' ahead so the meals could be ready when the train arrived.

"Supper at the Harvey House was real good. I think it cost $1.25. With stops at all stations for mail, Wells-Fargo express, baggage and passengers, plus 'flagstops' at 'blind sidings,' the 310-mile run from Waynoka to Clovis was an overnight schedule. Pullman fare was $2.00."

Total cost of the transcon journey in 1929 was $351.94, about twice the price of luxury train all the way. A headline in the January 17, 1930 issue of the Enterprise reported, "AIR TRAVEL RATES GREATLY REDUCED." The article listed new fares, including rail ticket and lower berth to Clovis and air beyond, from Waynoka to Albuquerque, $26: Winslow, $38: Kingman, $49: and Los Angeles, $63.

A week later, the Waynoka newspaper told of a TAT Trimotor crash in California, noting it "marked the greatest disaster in American Commercial air transportation." The accident claimed 16 lives, including 2 pilots, six other men and eight women.

Despite the tragedy, the air-train combination carried capacity loads in early 1930. On Sunday, January 27, TAT planes counted 79 passengers between Columbus and Waynoka, posting a record 75,075 passenger miles in one day.

Most issues of the Enterprise included stories of famous people making part or all of the coast-to-coast trip. Amelia Earhart was on the inaugural trip. Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis, the "Czar" of baseball, was on one flight into Waynoka. Chick Bale, nationally-known comedian and author spent a night in Waynoka enroute by TAT-train from St. Louis to Los Angeles. Anne Morrow Lindbergh made many trips, the paper of January 3, 1930, noting that "he (Lindbergh) usually was accompanied on his flights by his bride."

Helen Chapman is another native Waynokan with vivid memories of the great experiment. "I remember Colonel Lindbergh and Will Rogers coming in often. The crews stayed at the big, new Eastman Hotel. Being just a year out of high school, I thrilled every time I saw the pilots. Maybe it was their uniforms. They wore dark suits with white shirts and dark ties. Their caps were something like train conductors: but more flashy, cocky, jaunty.

"There was no security," continued Mrs. Chapman. "Crowds walked right up to the planes. Lindbergh sometimes sat on a bench near the plane, casually visiting with the public."

Wayne Carson, treasurer and past president of the Waynoka Chamber of Commerce, was born north of town in the year of TAT's glory. Recently he stood across the tracks, looking at the imposing Fred Harvey House building.

"There's a historical monument," he said. 'I think there should be much more of this important history preserved for future generations. I'm dedicated to seeing that it is."

Well it should be.

Waynoka's dream ended in October, 1930. On October 17, 1930, just 12 days before the first anniversary of the stock market crash, the Woods County Enterprise carried a story of the last TAT plane to arrive on a regular run. It was empty. Passengers had chosen the new all-air route with Tulsa and Oklahoma City stops between St. Louis and Amarillo. Transcontinental Air Transport soon would become Trans World Airlines (TWA).

But a collapsed economy and massive $3,000,000 deficit didn't kill this baby born of an experimental marriage; rather, it succumbed to progress, fading into history as an indelible chapter in the story of technological advance.

In less than six more years, aerodynamics and cooperating sciences counted invention unrivaled in any other similar short span of time. Advanced wing and body design, drag reduction, "skins" smoothed with flush rivets, retractible landing gear, increased engine efficiency, 100 octane gasoline, radio guidance, automatic pilot and other instruments were among the innovations.

The Douglas DC-3 emerged as a product of this supercreative period. Following its first flight in July, 1936, exactly seven years after the TAT-train honeymoon, the DC-3 established unmatched records for dependability and service.

Commercial aviation came of age in that dust-bowl year, 1936. The baby born of the mating of the Tin Goose and Iron-Horse played a brief but important part in making it possible. It all came together at the Waynoka connection.

"I saw Will Rogers and Charles Lindbergh often on the streets of Waynoka," recalled area native Garold Whitlaw, now a prominent Oklahoma executive.

Commercial aviation came of age in that dust-bowl year, 1936. The baby born of the mating of the Tin Goose and Iron-Horse played a brief but important part in making it possible.

On Becoming Ninety: A Plainsman To His Great Grandson

— Marge Cooke Porteus

— a tribute to the late Henry Cooke, the poet's father —

I'm ninety years today.
Georgia, Tennessee, then seventy years here
Where I've lived even before there was a town.
You come too.

I'll sit on this bench
Against the building;
It'll protect me from the wind.
I'm tired, but I'll sit tall.

This is the old men's corner
As seen in every prairie town.
See, I'm the only one
To brave the wind and dust today.

Here come those kids in a car.
They screech to avoid a dog.
Kids make a lot of noise, go fast. . . .
Now, when I was a boy.

When I was a boy,
I'd ride slowly into town and
Then spur my bay and shout
To let them know Hank was back.

All I wanted as a youth
Was a speedy horse, a gun, a fancy shirt.
I guess today is much the same —
A speedy car, a horn, a fancy shirt.

Here comes old Littleman.
He'll share our bench; he's my friend.
I've shared the Indians' confidence
Longer and stronger than most white men.

He was the first Indian,
A silent, blanketed creature
Who appeared when Pa staked his claim.
We have been friends since that night.

There's the banker.
He'll stop to pass the time.
I only go in to cash my meager pension,
But years ago I was a big account.

Did you know I had owned a bakery?
I built it with love and labor.
On the day of final payments
The bank closed its door.

Only your great grandmother's understanding,
Her sympathy and deep love
Helped me keep my courage,
Helped me keep my head held high.

Now, I look with pride
On a life well-lived,
On six children well wed,
And grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Ninety years well-lived.
Son, we'd best get the mail and go
Or Great Grandmother will start to fret.
She says I'm too old to mosey down.
You come too.

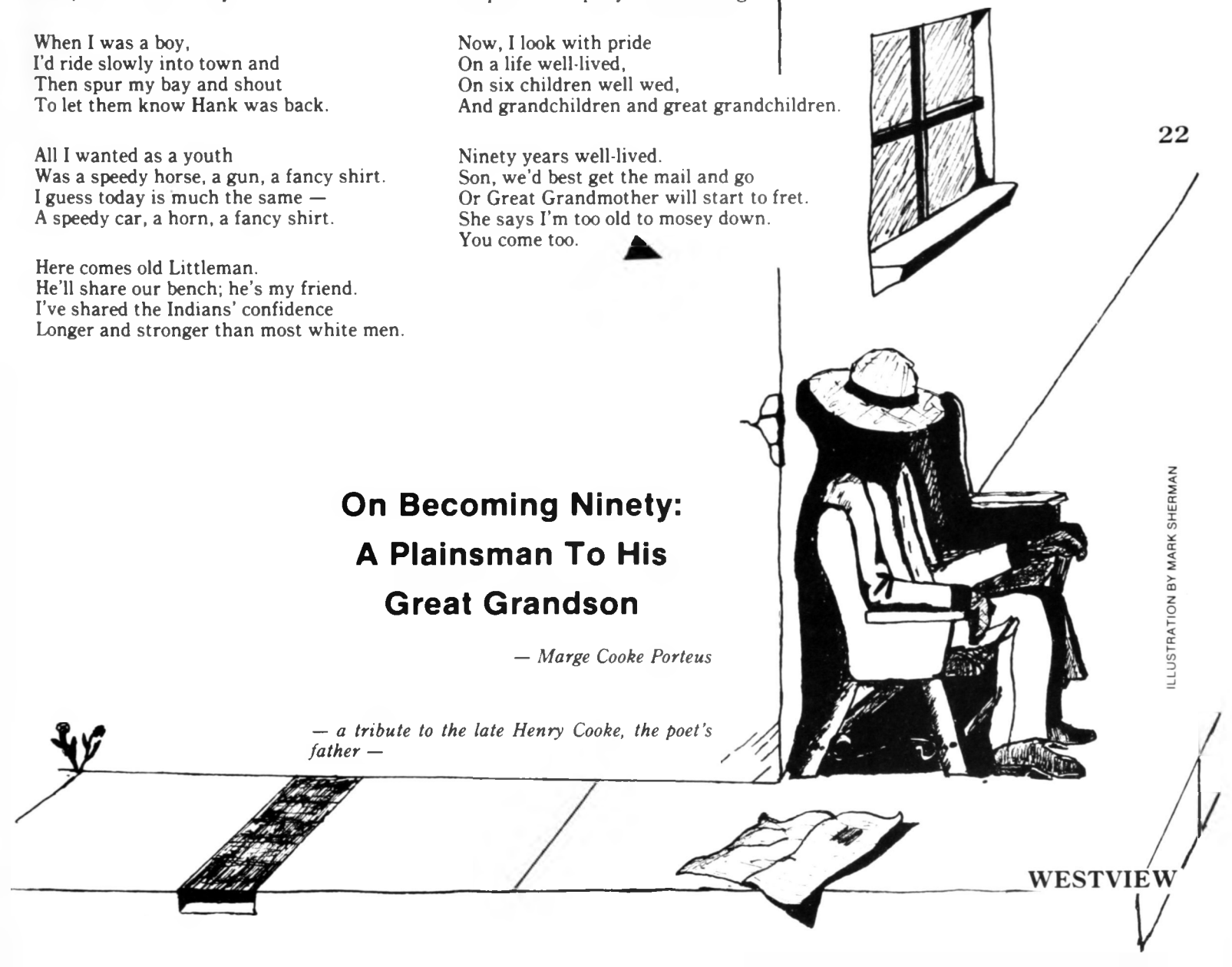


ILLUSTRATION BY MARK SHERMAN

POE

Coexistence

hot arid wind
dries the sweat
from the cowboys' shirts
as they herd the cattle
back to the range

hot arid wind
dries branded wounds
on the cattle hides
as they shuffle nervously
back to the range

— poetic glimpses at Western Oklahoma ranching —

BI

C

OKLAHOMA NOW

A hereford rubs
against an oil derrick
before he saunters over
to the shiny steel stanchion
enticed by perfect cubes of
sweet protein
put out by a cowgirl
in alligator boots
driving a cadilac.

Ranching ain't what it used to be.

TIC GLIMPSES

BY

LIE LOU

NTWELL

Midnight

Moon, full bright
fills the spaces
between black shapes

Leaves shuffle like
susurrus voices
tattling on critters moving there

Eerie oak fingers creep
across the windowpane
and shudders spasm up my spine

My heart pounds in tune
with howling night scavengers
slinking nearer

Soft pleading coos of night owls
cannot shut out the cry
of a rabbit caught

Invisible wind moves
the shapes about
and I tremble

Praying for the peaceful
night in the country
to end

ILLUSTRATION BY MIKE AIKEN

Racing The Sun

— Dr. R. Samuel Lackey

What was it like
To race the sun?
To gulp the wind?
To dance on the rain?

What was it like
To dodge the storm?
To leap the stream?
To pierce the snow?

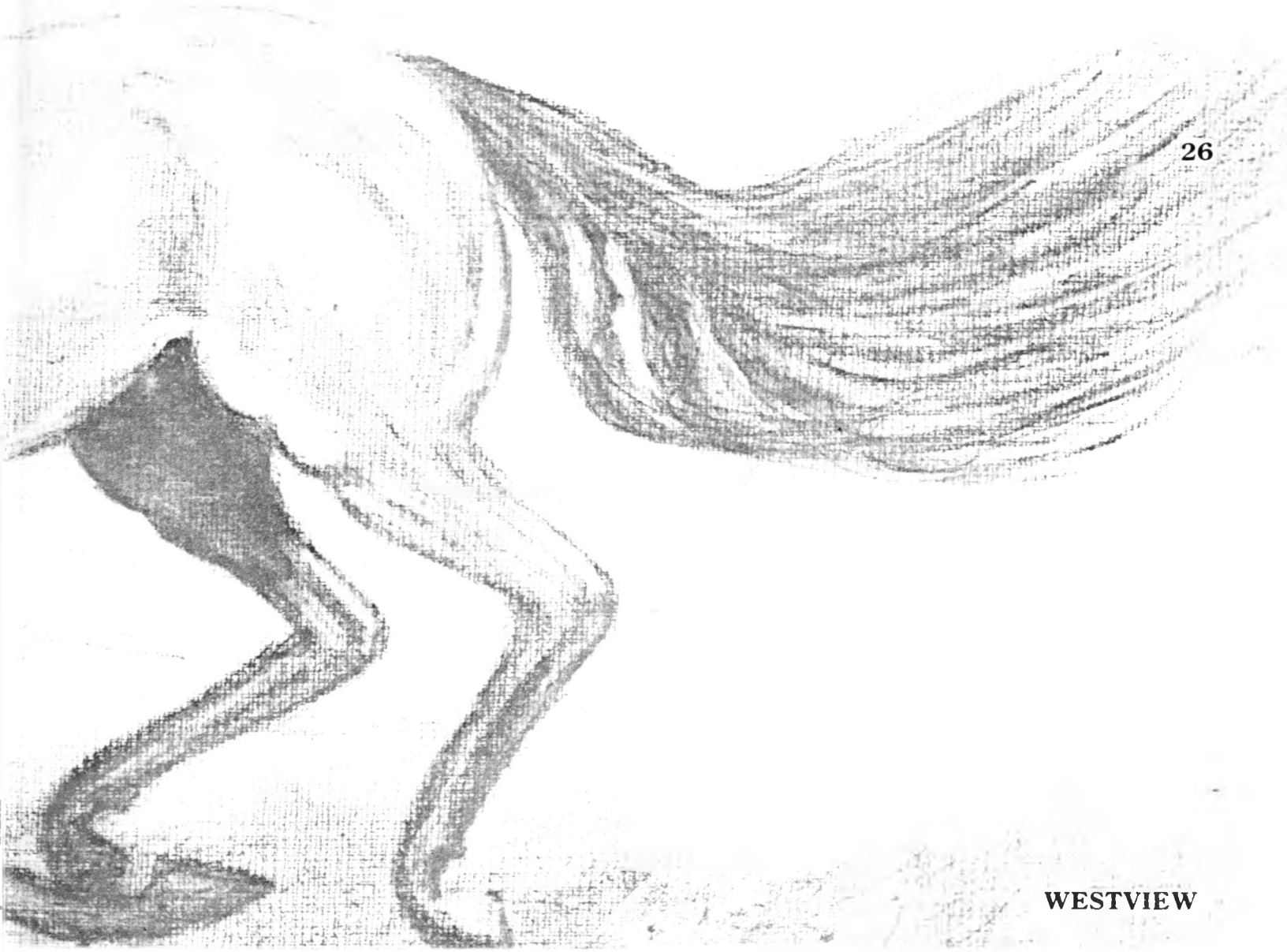
Not with machines
Nor the mind alone.
But with the whole self
As the runner of dreams.

Dare we race with the sun
On unmendable legs?
Beyond thinkable thoughts?
Across valleys of pain?

We can, if we reach
The speed of the soul —
Then the hoof does not need
The firm earth every step.

Flying hooves, my friend,
Can climb over space,
Can pivot on air,
Can stride the bright blood. . .

As they open the road,
As they winnow the wind,
Striking fire from the dust
In their thunderous, trembling
Race for the sun.



NOSTALGIA

Horse Cents

— by Denzle Minyard

Would you believe that I once bought a horse in Washita County, Oklahoma for twenty five cents? I surely did, and it was a perfectly legitimate exchange, and not bad merchandise. But before your skepticism runs any higher, let me tell you that this was over a half century ago.

In the early thirties of this century, and during the depth of the great depression, farmers and ranchers were not anxious to keep any extra livestock around. Times were hard, and I mean really hard for most of us, and feed and pasture for livestock was scarce because there was also a great drouth which created the famous dust bowl days which I well remember. It was indeed a dark, frustrating time for most of us. I use the term "most of us" because the magnitude of this depression was not the same for everyone.

Families and individuals who were already on their feet, and by this I mean those who owned their land, homes, machinery, and livestock, and had a little money in the bank, simply saw the depression as a time in which they should tighten down, hang on to what they had, and simply wait it out. However, I don't think anyone had an accurate concept of the vast span of time which would pass before the great depression lifted. It raged from the Fall of '29 until the onset of World War II. Franklin D. Roosevelt did try, and he initiated many programs which helped, but the quality of these programs was poor. Most of them were work-related programs and offered salaries in the one-dollar-per-day range, which was simply too weak to pull the economy out of it. But I believe Franklin D. Roosevelt was a great man and a great president.

Then there were the less fortunate ones who had nothing when the depression hit, and, unfortunately we were the ones who usually had no special skills and very little education. We found ourselves in a destitute situation with practically no chance of breaking out. We were virtually locked in. For the most part, we were poor but proud, desperate but honest. We were willing to do any kind of work, no matter how hard, just as long as we considered it honorable. So, it was in the early years of the depression that my father, in desperation, decided to try a venture which ultimately led him, my brother, and me to ride (horseback) all over three Western Oklahoma counties, and also necessitated several round trips from Colony, Oklahoma to Oklahoma City, also on horseback.

In the early 30's, there were still many horses in the country; almost everybody had horses. Much farming was still done with horse-drawn equipment, and most people kept two or three saddle horses to ride. But the farmers and ranchers were interested in keeping these horses only as long as they were useful, so Dad got the idea of riding around the country horseback to buy up unwanted horses: horses that were too old to be useful, lame horses, blind horses, outlaw horses. The latter are horses which emphatically refuse to be trained to ride or work. If you succeeded in getting one of them harnessed and hitched up, he was sure to have a runaway and tear up whatever it was that he was hooked up to, or if you succeeded in getting a saddle on him, he would buck you off before you had gone twenty yards.

My dad, my brother, and I had only two saddle horses between the three of us; and since I was only about eight years old, and my brother, James, was about ten, Dad decided that James and I should ride double, and that we should travel in one direction and he in another, in order to cover more territory. And so it was in the late Fall of 1929 that we struck out from our little pioneer cabin about six miles northeast of Colony, Oklahoma near Ghost Mound on our first venture in quest of horses.

James and I were riding a dapple-gray mare named Star. She was a magnificent mount, very high-spirited and extremely suspicious of her surroundings. She certainly was no kid pony, for she had boundless energy and was always tugging at the reins for more freedom to move faster. She was exhausting to ride because you had to constantly hold a tight rein on her to prevent her from winding herself. As we rode, we had to constantly watch the surroundings for anything that might spook her, for she could bolt sideways faster than a flash and could come nearer violating Newton's first law of motion than anything I have ever known in my life.

Mother had fixed us a sack lunch which we tied to the left girth ring on the saddle, and from the right girth ring hung a small bag of oats and shelled corn for Star. Dad had instructed us not to attempt to lead more than three horses home, so, from the saddle horn hung three (lasso) ropes about eighteen feet long each. These were stout ropes with a diameter about like a lariat rope, without the rigidity of a lariat. They had a slip knot on both ends so that one end could be placed over the horse's head and drawn around his neck, and the other end could be secured to the horn of the saddle.

Dad told us not to pay more than a dollar and a half for a horse, because the stock yard in Oklahoma City was paying only $2.50 - 3.00 a head for them, and we must make some profit on them or there was no point in doing it. So, with our horse, our lunch, lasso ropes, and $4.50 in cash, we rode off toward the west. Mother stood anxiously in the door of the cabin and watched us vanish beyond a small grove of locust trees, but before we got out of hearing range, she called to us and cautioned us not to range out too far and be sure to be home before dark.

We rode west for an hour or two, watching the pastures and studying the horses as we passed by them. James I knew horses very well, for we had grown up with them. It was fairly easy to identify old horses because their movements were slow, they were not alert, and they paid very little attention to strangers riding by. Because their teeth were worn down, they became poor and boney, usually developed a rough, shaggy unkept coat, and bore signs of malnutrition. If they were grazing, it would be for the small, more tender grasses. Only the young horses with good teeth ate the tall, tough winter grass. There were always some blind horses back then; and blindness, of course, increased with old age. Horses that had lived and worked for twelve years or more were generally considered old. Some, however, did live to be eighteen or twenty years old. It was easy to spot blind horses because of the peculiar way they held their head and ears in order to catch sounds more acutely.

We were riding by a large pasture which was part of the spread belonging to an old man that I knew only as "Old John." There was a small herd of horses about 150 yards from the road, and we could plainly see that some of them were no longer useful, so we decided to approach Old John and see if he was interested in culling out. His house was about a mile on down the road so we slacked off on the reins a bit, and Star broke into a fast gallop. We turned into Old John's driveway so fast that both of us had to lean almost horizontally to

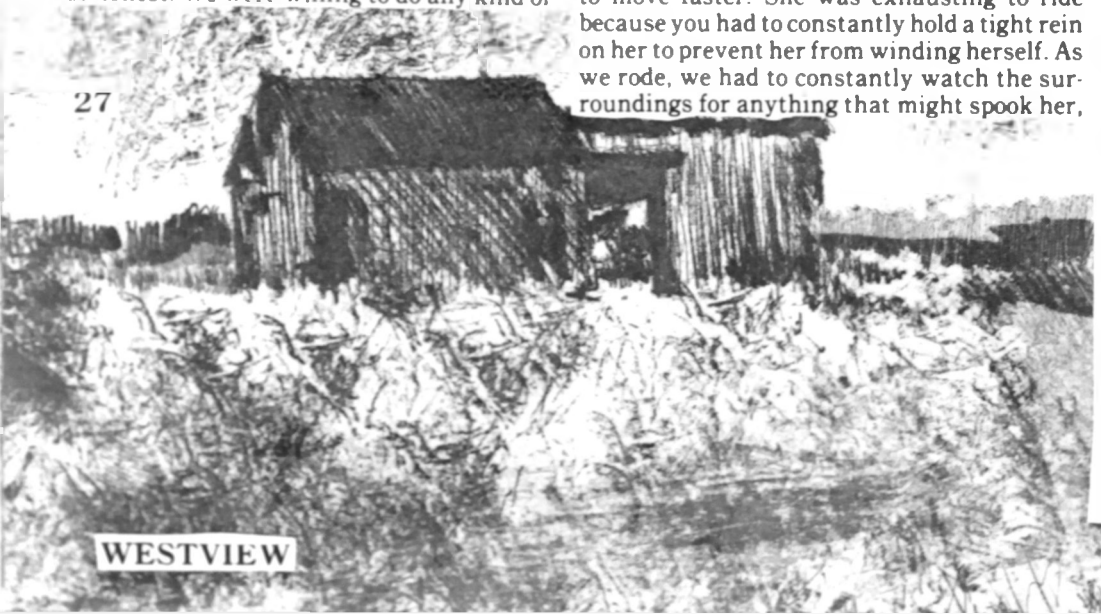


ILLUSTRATION BY MIKE AIKEN

stay in the saddle. About this time, two large coon hounds bolted out from under Old John's porch with their heads pitched skyward and mouths wide open, howling a coon hound duet which ranged at times into total discord, and then converging into pure canine harmony. With lightning-like reaction, I felt Star's rear end go down and I knew instantly that we were in for one of those extremely fast "stop and whirl" maneuvers of hers. I pulled my legs in tight about her flanks for more stability in the saddle. This I normally would not have done, for Star was extremely touchy about her flanks. I also knew from experience that once she began this maneuver nothing would stop her, not even if she lost both of us. I saw James grasp the reins tightly in his right hand, while his left hand clutched the saddle horn, and the stirrups came in tight against Star's rib cage.

For an instant we were shrouded in a cloud of dust as Star brought her powerful rear legs forward and lowered her rump almost to the ground, as dirt and dust shot upward from her plowing hooves that ripped into the earth. At this same instant, she was pawing sideways with front legs, sending a jet of dust and clods horizontally toward the two startled hounds who had already tucked their tails and were emerging from their own cloud of dust, as they leaped skyward for the porch. For a split second, I felt a whirling sensation in my head as the flesh on my face and arms crawled. Then, with a sigh of relief, I felt her rise to normal stance, and I quickly released my legs from her flanks. We knew that this was the calm after the storm. Fortunately, our bridle was equipped with curved bits which were commonly used back then to control high-strung horses.

When the dust cleared, we saw Old John standing calmly on the porch as if nothing at all had happened. "Hi, young fellers, what can I do fer yeh?" asked Old John in his slow, country drawl. Still visibly shaken, my brother stammered, "We was riding by and noticed some ol horses in your herd back there."

"Yep," said Old John, "I've got a couple at won't make't through this here winter, probly. I had thought about shootin em." (The shooting was not a barbaric gesture, but rather an act of mercy.)

"Well, we're tryin to collect a herd to take to the City market", said Brother. "

"Wait'll I get my hat," said Big John.

The ragged screen door slammed as Old John entered the house. When Old John came out, we went down by the windmill, got a cold drink of water, and moved on down to the horse lot where we watered Star while Old John saddled up. He had three saddle horses in the lot. Two of them were large, beautiful quarter horses, and the other one was a small pinto mare. She was predominantly a dark-gold color with large, irregular cream-colored spots which were randomly spaced about her body. She was plump and slick, but smooth mouthed (meaning she was definitely past her youth). Old John called her "Beanie" because she looked like a pinto bean. Beanie was an affectionate little mare and loved children. Coming over to me, she stuck her little nose right up in my face and gave me a good smelling over. I patted her on the neck and moved swiftly away from her because Star was backing her ears and I knew she was getting ready to lunge at little Beanie and knock her down.

We mounted up and rode on out through a series of corrals and out into the pasture. We could see the herd about three-quarters of a mile away. Slinking along behind and silently keeping considerable distance were the two coon hounds. We reached the herd and cut the two old animals out so we could size them up. They were large, still in fairly good shape, but definitely very old. But we were sure they could easily stand the drive to Oklahoma City. "How much do you want for the pair?" inquired James.

"Oh, I recken about three dollars for the pair of em" said old John.

"Well, I don't know", said Brother, "We can't make much on em at that price."

Just then I blurted out, "We'll give you three dollars and twenty five cents if you'll throw in Beanie."

My brother practicaly knocked me out of the saddle, as he slugged me in the ribs with his elbow. "Shut up, you little fool," he whispered. It wasn't that he objected to the bargain I was driving. The point was simply that I was a kid and wasn't supposed to open my mouth. Anything that I might have said would have been out of context. Old John stiffened in his saddle and looked squarely at me as I slunk down in the saddle behind Big Brother. Slowly an amused country grin spread across his weathered old face. "Young feller, you gist bought yourself a bargain. Heaven knows Beanie is worth more an any twenty five cents. She's always been a good brood mare, but she's gettin too old to breed, and I don't need her as a saddle pony, aint got no kids around nohow."

I could hardly believe my ears! I had bought Beanie for twenty five cents! I knew that James might have bought the other two horses for less, if I had kept my mouth shut and permitted him to negotiate, so I sat perfectly still. I knew I had said all I needed to, all I dared to say. James reached into his pocket, counted out $3.25, and slowly handed it across to Old John. I slid silently from the saddle, took a handful of oats from Star's lunch sack, removed two lasso ropes from the saddle horn, and walked slowly, with oats extended and rope behind me toward the two old horses. The oats did the trick, and in no time I had both of the horses caught, and was leading them back to Star.

We secured the ropes to the saddle horn and headed back to the horse lot to pick up Beanie. The two canines followed silently, still keeping their distance. By now it was far past lunch time, so we went to a large mulberry tree near the windmill, fed Star her oats, and sat down on a bench to eat the lunch that Mother had packed for us. Old John kept the chickens fought back while he bragged on his dogs and told coon-hunting stories. I ate rapidly, for I was anxious to get Beanie. I wanted to crawl on her little fat back and see how she rode.

When we had finished eating, Old John and I went down to the lot. He went into a small barn and got an old halter with a three-foot rope attached to the ring. "She's halter broke," he said, "and you can keep this old halter." He meant that she could be ridden simply with a halter. I slipped the halter on her, jumped as hard as I could, and landed belly down across her back. Then I swung my right leg over her rump and erected myself, making adjustments for proper bareback riding. Beaney stood still and relaxed as I mounted her, just as if we had done it a thousand times. As I picked up on the rope, Beanie turned her head around and looked directly at me as a contented gesture, and I thought to myself, "This is her way of smiling." Old John patted her on the shoulder as he looked up at me and said "Take good care of her, Son, and don't ride her too fast." And I looked squarely into his wrinkled old eyes and said, "Thank you sir, and don't you worry, for nothing bad will ever happen to Beanie."

I sat proudly on Beanie's soft, fat little back, and as we rode out Old John's driveway, I turned to wave at him before we vanished down the road, and you know what? Old John and the two hounds were standing silently on the porch. The hounds were wagging their tails, and I could have sworn all three of them were smiling.

Brother and I rode proudly home with our purchases for the day. Mom and Dad were happy for us, and we never did tell them the fine details of that first day. We simply told them we bought all three horses for $3.25. But before this horse-buying adventure ended, we had made dozens of trips which ultimately took us over the greater part of three counties. The trips were as varied as the Oklahoma days and the individuals we encountered along the way. A full account of these experiences would fill a whole book, and this would not include the drives horseback from Colony to Oklahoma City, down old Highway 41 straight into the stock market. Since we could make only a dollar or two per horse, we could not afford to ship them to market; so when we had collected a small herd, twenty-five to thirty head, we would herd them the sixty some miles to market. Mother went along and drove a covered wagon in front of the herd. They soon learned to follow the wagon. We would make camp along the road late in the evening, sleeping and eating in the wagon. But this is another story whose account I hope to find time to write someday.

ILLUSTRATION BY JOANN MEDDERS

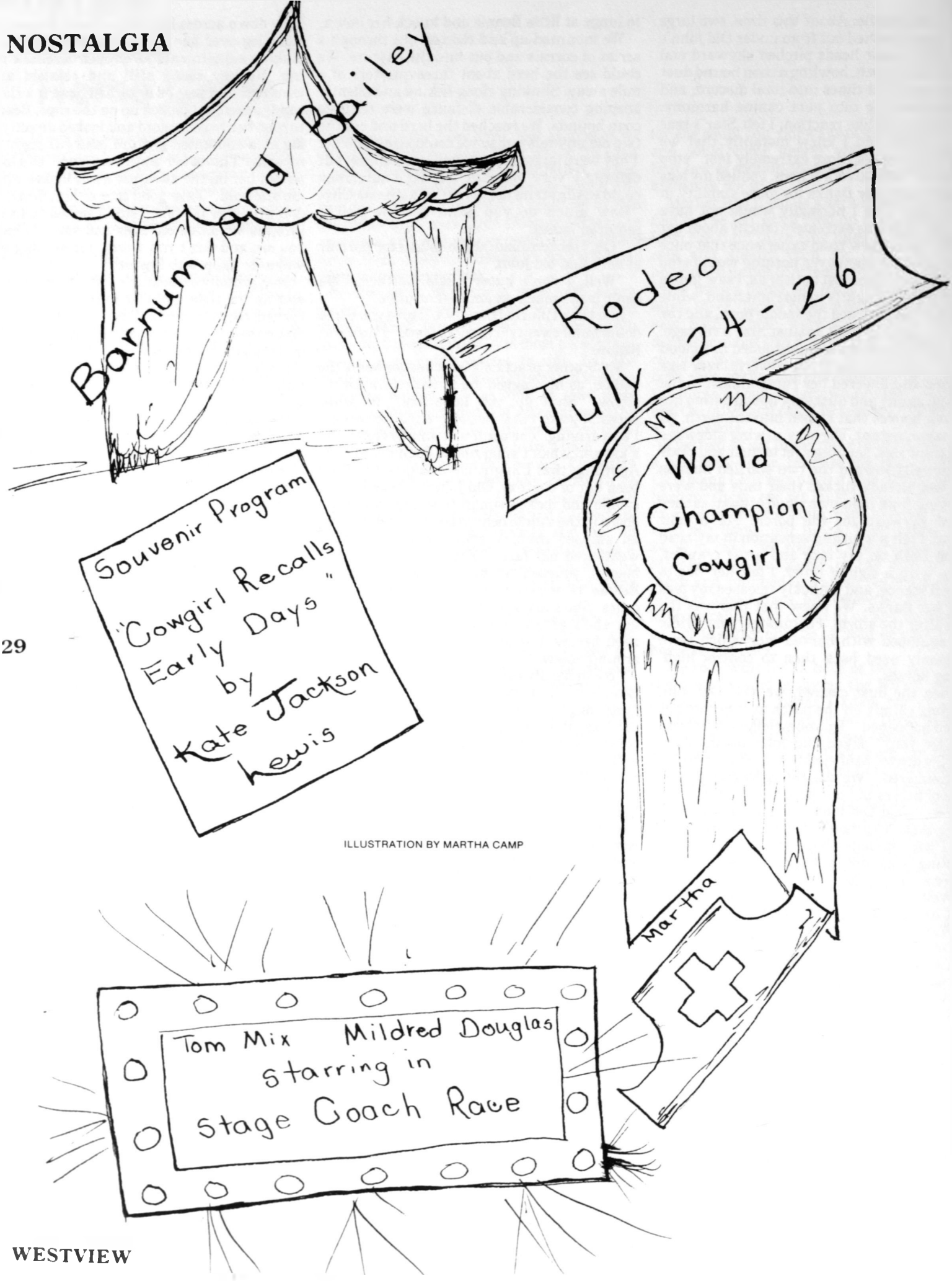


ILLUSTRATION BY MARTHA CAMP

—an article about the days of rodeoing that required tough cowgirls—

Visualize, if you can, a female champion steer and bronc rider, circus trick rider, movie actress, wild Angora goat trainer, and an expert trick shooter. Put all these talents in one package and you have a composite of 82-year-old Mildred Chrismon of Lawton, Oklahoma. The thrice-married woman uses the name, Mildred Douglas, for quick identification in rodeo references. "Since I won all my championships under my first husband's name, I still use it," she explained.

This charming lady isn't all of that now, but she is still a dynamo of energy. During last year's Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City, she renewed her friendships with remaining members of the "Wild Bunch," early rodeo performers. Yakima Canutt, whom Chrismon saw last in 1917, she remembered well because he was selected top cowboy and she top cowgirl, at the 1917 Pendleton Roundup.

Chrismon began her colorful career when she was a student in an exclusive New England girls school, although she said she had been riding horses since "I was knee high to a grasshopper." Daughter of a Pennsylvania University professor, she used her Saturday allowance to rent a horse for one hour from a livery stable. The other half dollar was spent for lunch, and then she walked the three miles back home.

When a Wild West Show came to town, the teenager rode a streetcar to the show's site where she was soon a participating performer. When her father found out what she was doing, he objected but gave in to her pleading.

"Later," she recalled, "he became my best fan. He thought I was perfect."

Fears? Chrismon doesn't have any. "I was absolutely unafraid to try any stunt."

How did the venturesome person break into rodeo? "After I married at age 21, my husband and I joined a small circus where I did side-saddle trick riding. Later I did a lot of other stunts for Barnum and Bailey. In July, 1916 I heard about a rodeo at nearby Kansas City. I'd never been to a rodeo before, but I entered and won first money.

"The entry fee was $10 and I competed with nine girls. The third round I drew a lazy horse. When a man hit him, he started to buck, throwing me forward until my four-inch belt caught on the saddle horn. Everytime the horse bucked, his head came back to hit me in the face, breaking my nose and splitting my lip. The judge asked me if I wanted another horse. I rode again, this time coming out a champ and winning first money."

Her memory still sharp, Chrismon recalled dates and contestants she met in various rodeos, pausing now and then to comment on one of them.

"I began rodeoing in 1916 and rode until 1926. The cowgirls against whom I competed from 1916 to 1919 were the real old timers —good riders, too. First, there was Lucille Mulhall, my especially good friend from Guthrie, Oklahoma. She promoted rodeos with Homer Wilson, first publisher of the Wild Bunch magazine.

"Lucille roped steers and handled stock in the arena. She even snubbed bucking horses. For me she never cut one loose until I told her I was ready. Lucille lent me her 'White Man' horse to trick ride on. At this time, I had never trick rode so Lucille told me what to do each time I passed her as I went round the arena. Three contestants made a team so I came out third.

"The Bucking horse riders I contested against were Prairie Lilly Allen, Prairie Rose Henderson, Fox Hastings, Bonnie McCarroll, who was killed when thrown from a bucking horse in 1919; Mable Strickland, Ruth Roach Salmon, Vera McGinnis, Mayme Stroud, Margie-Rose, Smith-Wright, Florence King Randolf, Katie Wilks-Canutt, Clyde Lindsey, Ruby Dickey, Maude Tarr, and Mabel Baker. Fannie Sperry Stelle rode only in bronc riding exhibitions."

The venerable cowgirl went on to say, "I'd rodeo as long as the season lasted and then go back to the circus for the winter months. The next rodeo was at Cheyenne where I was named World Champion Cowgirl. My next stop was at Pendleton. There we had the best bucking horses I ever rode. I won that show, too.

"After my husband went to World War I and didn't return, I quit performing and took up nursing," the octogenerian continued. "Then I was asked to do a bit part in a Tom Mix movie called STAGECOACH RACE. I did parts in four movies, but I didn't like pictures, so I went back to riding bucking horses.

"In 1919, I went to Garden City, Kansas where the boys rode steers. I decided I'd like to try one. The boys got me a surcingle and I made a successful ride, though he wasn't a fighter like the bucking bulls today."

Queried about changes in rodeo over the years, Chrismon reminisced, "Cowgirls don't ride broncs now; they do only barrel racing. Cowboys used to rope and tie steers just as the modern cowboys rope and tie calves now."

Does she think barrel racing is too tame? "No, it requires good horsemanship. Some of the girls handle their horses exceptionally well. Being able to handle a horse's head is so important!"

What about clowns? Were they needed in the early rodeo? "Well," the soft-voiced lady replied, "they weren't needed so much then as now with all these fighting bulls. Then, it was mainly for entertainment, though sometimes a steer acted up. The clowns didn't use barrels then. They depended altogether on their quickness. I remember Red Sublet; he was a nut. So funny and so fearless."

In 1919, Chrismon entered the bucking horse event at Cheyenne, hoping to win the world championship again. "But I just didn't draw the best horses." She did receive the honor of being the first cowgirl to conquer the famous Two Step.

— a tale of "what if"

BURIED TREASURE IN WESTERN OKLAHOMA

— by Donita Lucas Shields

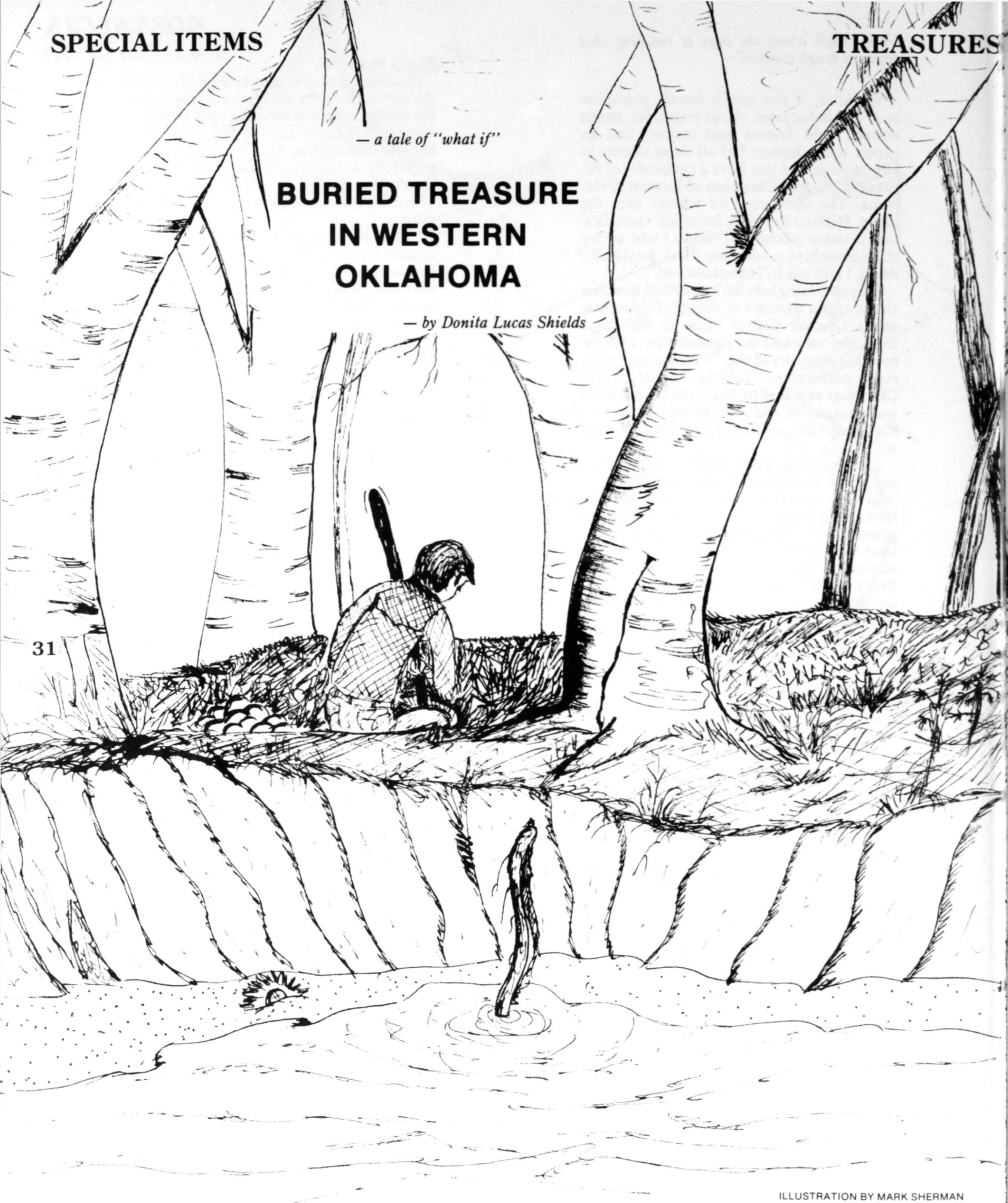


ILLUSTRATION BY MARK SHERMAN

Older than ten-gallon hats, Arbuckle coffee, and barbed-wire drift fences, buried treasures are a part of the heritage of Western Oklahoma. No one can verify these legends, but the tales live on.

These lost treasure stories seem to follow Old Spanish Road, which once traversed the area now known as Roger Mills, Beckham, Washita, and Custer counties. Each legend related a similar situation when the treasure bearers were forced to bury and abandon their gold after savage bands of Indians attacked them.

In most instances, only one or two men survived these bloody attacks. Either they or their relatives returned years later to recover their buried caches. They always brought with them crudely drawn maps marking the location of the hidden wealth, but none of the gold has ever been found. Today, those treasures still remain to intrigue everyone who is interested in buried mysteries and lost caches.

A 1905 edition of THE CHEYENNE STAR contains information concerning a large quantity of gold buried on Sandstone Creek southeast of Cheyenne. Rev. Davis, a well-known, responsible person, received a map from a Mexican claiming to have been one of three survivors of an Indian massacre in 1859.

This story described how Indians attacked Mexican prospectors when they were returning home with their gold. The three survivors buried the treasure before making their escape. Davis' map showed the lay of the ground and trees where the battle took place. The spot was clearly marked where the Mexican buried the gold.

Rev. Davis spent years searching for the exact location. During his diggings for the cache, he found several human skeletons. The soil had been disturbed, and he also found bits of canvas which he thought might have been the bags that contained the gold. Then powerful underground springs forced him to stop digging.

Davis attempted to draw out the water and continue his efforts. Unbiased parties saw his map and the pieces of canvas. His story was claimed to be an authentic one. However, the newspaper failed to publish any follow-up information concerning his success. The mystery still remains.

Another 1905 article in the same newspaper was told by people living near Antelope Hills at Crawford. They had always heard stories about successful prospectors returning from Spanish Peaks, Colorado, in the 1850's. The miners were traveling with heavily laden pack mules and were attacked by roving bands of Cheyennes and Comanches. The Mexicans hid their gold in one of the caves in the Hills.

The men fought with the Indians until they ran out of ammunition. Two brothers-in-law survived the ambush. After returning to Mexico, they gave a crude map to a young relative. This fellow did not make the journey to Antelope Hills until he was an old man. Residents of Crawford watched the elderly Mexican digging for the treasure, but fifty years of erosion changed the terrain of the Hills. The gold was never found.

According to Truman Morgan, whose parents homesteaded southeast of Elk City in 1892, a $40,000 payroll of gold coins was buried near Soldier Springs. Morgan remembered two stories concerning this money, which was being transported in leather saddlebags by a troop of soldiers.

One legend related that the soldiers feared an Indian ambush and prepared themselves by burying the gold near the main springs which flowed from a red sandstone bluff. During the night Indians attacked and killed all of them except two. These men returned years later to recover the money, but they could not find it.

For years farmers living near Soldier Springs have continued the fruitless search. Today the sandstone bluff and springs are obliterated by years of eroding soils, but old-timers vividly remember the cliff with soldiers' names carved upon it.

Morgan's second version of the lost payroll stated that Indians attacked the soldiers before they buried the gold. The men separated after several were killed. Four of the troopers survived the Indian attack and raced upstream for more than two miles to the head of Soldier Creek. Here they buried the gold and then marked the spot with two cottonwood tree limbs.

Many years later two of the surviving soldiers returned for the payroll. Again the terrain was completely changed by erosion, and they found nothing. The $40,000 cache of gold still remains somewhere along Soldier Creek.

An 1895 edition of the CLOUD CHIEF HERALD-SENTINEL contained information concerning mining claims that were staked fourteen miles southwest of Arapaho. Early miners set up camp at the mouths of Boggy Creek and Turkey Creek. This article claimed that $500 of gold had already been mined and a Colorado mining company had sent carloads of machinery and several men to work the new gold field.

The article stated that miners found graves of seven skeletons and a Spanish inscription that translated "Gold discovered here in 1676 (or 1876)." Gold seekers also found two ancient crucible ladles used for smelting, a set of apothecary balance scales, various rusty tools, an old saddle and bridle, the remains of a rotting wagon, and eleven Mexican silver coins dated in the 1840s.

According to this article, there was additional evidence of old mines and crude smelting ruins farther west in Roger Mills County. Someone had found lumps of gold as large as grains of corn in a creek which Spaniards once called Kasharado. No one knew where this creek was located.

An edition of the Cloud Chief paper dated August 30, 1895, contained a story told by Pedro Jaungonzales, who was then 75 or 80 years old. He claimed that Indians captured him when he was a boy and brought him to this area. He escaped from his captors and wandered into a Mexican fort where miners lived while digging and smelting gold.

Pedro remembered that this ancient fort was located on Turkey Creek, two or three miles southwest of present-day Canute. Those investigating the area in the 1890's found evidence of ruins that were 200 feet wide and 400 feet long. Inside these ridges were mounds that could have been buildings of various sizes. Jaungonzales said the Mexicans called the place Cascorillo, and that they took all gold they mined and smelted to Nacogdoches, Tx.

An early Washita County surveyor made drawings of Cascorillo which were published with the 1895 article. The surveyor believed that the buildings and fort walls were made of adobe and had crumbled away until nothing remained but ridges and mounds.

People exploring the ruins claimed to have found artifacts and gold within the area. The Cloud Chief newspaper article predicted that gold mining would become one of the greatest industries in Western Oklahoma.

An article in a 1909 ARAPAHOE ARGUS related that Edward Mershow found a large gold nugget while digging under a tree on his farm near Butler. Neighbors said it made him a wealthy man and that he immediately left the droughty area to buy an irrigated farm in Arizona. They never heard from him again.

Another legend claimed that 26 loads of gold ingots were abandoned between Elk City and Hammon on White Shield Creek. A Mexican convoy, transporting these gold ingots valued at $3 million, was ambushed by Indians when they topped a high ridge of hills west of the creek. The miners were forced down into the creek, and all were killed.

In 1890 an Indian brave appeared at Darlington Indian Agency with a gold ingot. The Indian said his grandfathers took part in the attack, but he refused to tell more. No one was able to follow him to the location where he supposedly found the ingot. The gold was presumably abandoned somewhere southwest of present day Carpenter, but it was never found.

Today, most people assume that early newspaper editors acted as dedicated supporters for their towns, communities, and counties. These treasure tales could have been published as hoaxes to lure more people into Western Oklahoma. Still, the historical facts and evidence remain that Old Spanish Road from Santa Fe to Natchitoches did travel through this region.

Who know but what all the old legends of hidden gold are true and the caches are still waiting to be discovered. Or if the tales are no more than prairie lore, the stories will continue as a memorable part of the exciting heritage of Western Oklahoma.

ILLUSTRATION BY LINDA FICKLING

FALL, 1983. The theme to be developed in this issue is "Oklahoma Pride," and the deadline for submissions is August 1, 1983.

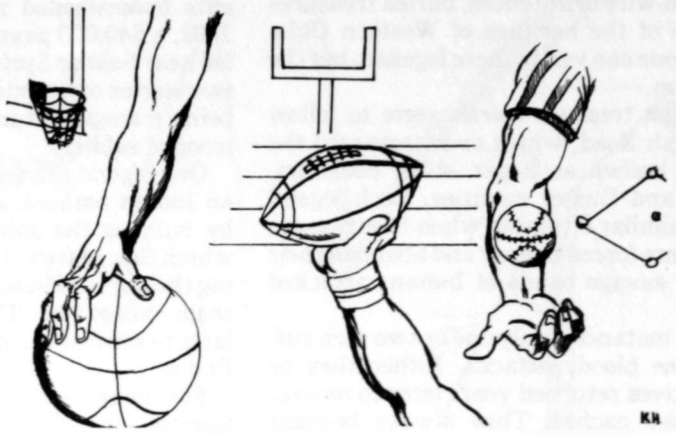


ILLUSTRATION BY KEVIN BENNETT HILL

WINTER, 1983. This issue will have the theme "Oklahoma Athletics." Submissions may deal with athletes and athletic events. Deadline: November 1, 1983.

ILLUSTRATION BY KEVIN BENNETT HILL

SPRING, 1984. This issue — "Oklahoma Teachers" — will give our readers a chance to give deserved honor to outstanding Western Oklahoma educators.

ILLUSTRATION BY LINDA FICKLING

SUMMER, 1984. "Western Oklahoma Religion" is a theme that should draw many interesting submissions from our readers. The deadline for submissions is May 1, 1984.

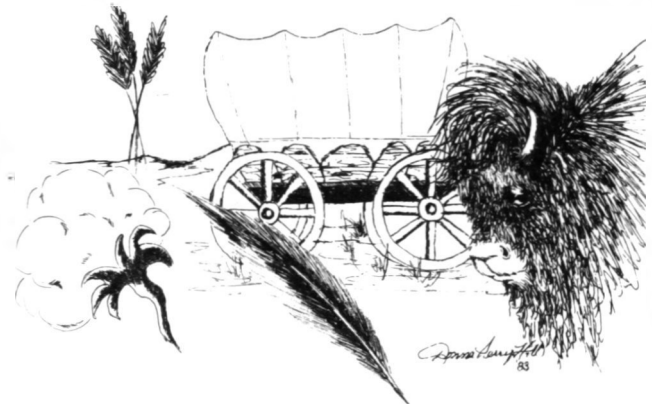


ILLUSTRATION BY DONNA PERRY HILL

FALL, 1984. The theme for this issue is "Western Oklahoma's Colorful Past." Surely there are some interesting tales that have never been told before in writing. Submissions deadline is August 1, 1984.

History for the Future

— by Kathy Pyle

Anne Hodges Morgan and H. Wayne Morgan, both widely respected historians, have recently edited a book compiled of six important, thought-provoking essays that offer in-depth study of the reasons for Oklahoma's history and development. OKLAHOMA: NEW VIEWS OF THE FORTY-SIXTH STATE has a variety of material ranging from an essay by Douglas Hale titled "The People of Oklahoma: Economics and Social Change" to a piece by Anne Hodges Morgan called "Oklahoma in Literature." All of the essays are fact-filled works that draw conclusions about our state's development, people, economics, politics, and place in literature.

The future cannot be prepared for without a thorough examination of the past — not only by natives of the state, but also by newcomers seeking information about their new home. This book contains fresh information concerning our state's past growth that is presented in a scholarly manner. This book is not for the blasé browser of Oklahoma history. It is specifically for the enthusiastic history reader who is looking for new facts about our state.

This book, which was selected as one of ten Diamond Jubilee books in celebration of the state's 75th anniversary, is available for $16.95 from the University of Oklahoma Press, 1005 Asp Avenue, Norman, Oklahoma, 73019.

ILLUSTRATION BY STONEY LACY

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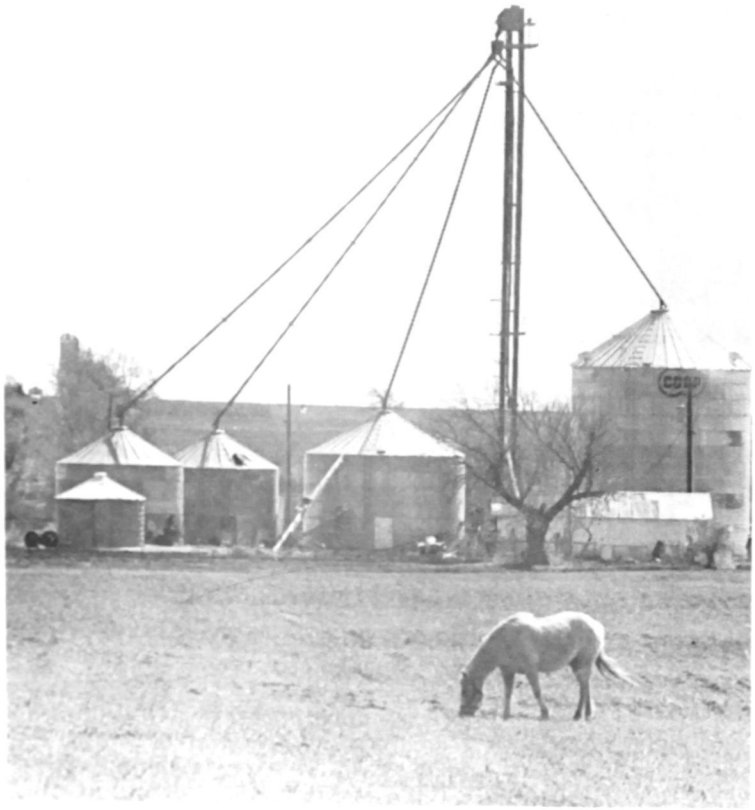

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WESTVIEW Salutes

The Executive Committee of the Southwestern Regional Studies Center

"ROUND-UP" BY LINDA FICKLING

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COWGIRL

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